

## ***Candidiasis***

**Dear Parent or Guardian,**

**You are being provided with this fact sheet:**

- ☐ **because you or your child may have been exposed to candidiasis (thrush).** If you believe your child has candidiasis, contact your medical provider. Notify your child care provider, school, or preschool immediately after the diagnosis has been made.
  - ☐ **for informational purposes only.**
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### **What is candidiasis?**

Candidiasis of the mouth and throat is a fungal infection that occurs when there is too much growth of a fungus called *Candida*. *Candida* is normally found on the skin, mouth, throat, and intestinal tract of healthy people. Excessive growth of *Candida* on moist surfaces around the lips, inside the cheeks, and on the tongue is referred to as thrush. Additionally, *Candida* infections can be found in the diaper area, on nails, and in areas where the body forms folds of skin.

### **What are the symptoms of candidiasis?**

People with candidiasis usually have painless, white patches in the mouth. Symptoms may also include pain in the throat and difficulty swallowing. In the diaper area, there may be pink and red patches of skin that are often bordered by red pimples.

### **How is candidiasis spread?**

Most cases of candidiasis are caused by the person's own *Candida* germs which normally live in the mouth or digestive tract. A person has symptoms when too many *Candida* germs grow. In rare circumstances, candidiasis can be transmitted by contact with the saliva or mucus of an infected individual presumably while lesions are present.

### **Who is at risk for candidiasis?**

This disease almost always occurs in people with an already weakened immunity or those who are taking certain antibiotics or medications. Oral thrush occurs most frequently in infants less than a month old.

### **How is candidiasis diagnosed?**

A doctor may take a sample by swabbing the infected tissue and look at it under a microscope. If there is evidence of *Candida* infection, the sample will be cultured to confirm the diagnosis.

### **How is candidiasis treated?**

Candidiasis is generally treated with a prescription of antifungal medication, such as Nystatin or Clotrimazole. Symptoms, which may be uncomfortable, may persist if treatment is not sought.

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### **Child Care Health Program**

401 Fifth Avenue ■ Seattle, WA 98104-1818 ■ tel: 206.263-8262 ■ fax: 206.205.6236

**Adapted from the Snohomish Health District**

### How is the spread of candidiasis reduced?

- Keep skin clean and dry.
- Use antibiotics only as directed by a medical provider.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle, including proper nutrition.
- People with diabetes should try to keep their blood sugar under tight control.
- Follow proper diapering, handwashing, and sanitation of contaminated articles (such as mouthed toys and baby bottle nipples).

### Exclude from group setting?

Children with candidiasis do not need to be excluded from child care or school.

### References

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

- Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Page 171

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

- Candida infections of the mouth, throat, and esophagus. website

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This document was last reviewed 9/2021*

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