



Thrush (Candidiasis)

What is thrush?

A yeast infection predominately produced by *Candida albicans*, causing mouth infections in young infants

What are the signs or symptoms?

- White patches on the inside of cheeks and on gums and the tongue
- Usually causes no other signs or symptoms

What are the incubation and contagious periods?

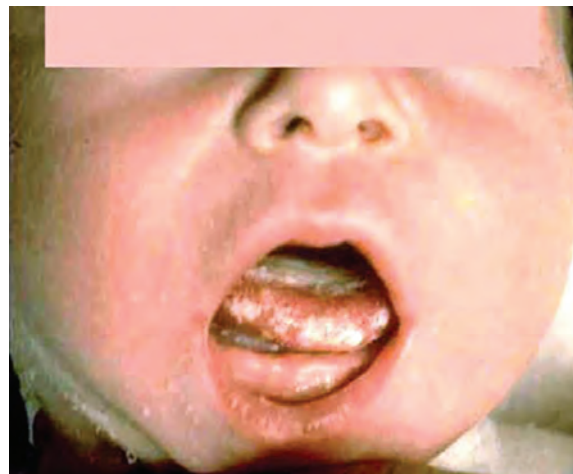
- Incubation period: Unknown.
- Contagious period: The yeast that causes thrush is widespread in the environment, normally lives on the skin, and is found in the mouth and stool. Mild infection of the lining of the mouth is common in healthy infants. Thrush can occur during or after antibiotic use. Repetitive or severe thrush could signal immune problems.

How is it spread?

- *C albicans* is present in the intestinal tract and mucous membranes of healthy people.
- A warm environment (eg, mouth) fosters growth and spread.
- Person-to-person transmission (although very rare) may occur from a mother to her baby when the mother has a vaginal yeast infection and from breastfeeding babies to their mothers when babies with thrush infect mothers' nipples.

How do you control it?

- Use good hand-hygiene technique at all the times listed in Chapter 2.
- Treatment of individuals who have an infection so the quantity of fungus in any area is reduced to levels the body can control.
- Wash and sanitize toys, bottles, and pacifier nipples after they have been mouthed. Do not allow sharing of mouthed objects between children without first washing and sanitizing them.



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Candida (thrush) infection in a 1-week-old

What are the roles of the educator and the family?

- Report the infection to the staff member designated by the early childhood education program or school for decision-making and action related to care of ill children. That person, in turn, alerts the parents/guardians for treatment of the child.
- Administer prescribed medication as instructed by the child's health professional.

Exclude from educational setting?

No.

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