

# **Do you suffer from Candida?**

**Reducing the effects  
of Candida  
with five natural  
ingredients and diet**



**A report by Peter Jackson**

FIRST EDITION

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# 1. Are you sure you have Candida?

Candida overgrowth can have many symptoms and I have made reference to some of these later in this report.

However, as many of these symptoms can also refer to other issues, it is best to know for sure if you have Candida before trying to treat it with supplements or a change in diet.

One of the most accurate ways of testing for a Candida overgrowth is to take a stool test. This is a simple test that can be carried out from your own home.

There are now a number of laboratories who can offer this service. I have used a laboratory in Germany for a number of years and found them to be very reliable and accurate. You can learn more about them on [www.hauss.de](http://www.hauss.de)

If you would like to enquire about having a stool test, then FREEPHONE us on 0500 127249 and we can forward a form to you.

## 2. Understanding Candida so that you can reduce the chance of it re-appearing

You hear and read a lot about this mysterious Candida, but what is the truth and what is myth?

In our intestines we have about 500 different species of micro-organisms, mostly bacteria. Usually bacteria are thought to be the bad guys, which make us ill, but in fact we need these tiny tenants to keep food bugs and upset stomachs at bay and to produce a number of useful substances for our health.

These good guys are called “The intestinal flora” or microflora – better known as probiotics.

Candida is a fungus which also belongs to the intestinal flora. These can be yeasts, similar to the ones we know for baking bread or making wine or moulds similar to the tasty ones, which make cheeses. Or they can even be the black stuff, which causes food to ferment and decay.

Usually their numbers are small. Candida is a kind of yeast, a tiny single celled organism, which in normal circumstances is a harmless part of our intestinal flora.

However, sometimes when we are not so fit these Candida yeasts can develop the ability to get nasty, grow into large numbers and cause some unpleasant symptoms.

Candida is a much used term. Usually it refers to *Candida albicans*. Yet there are many more species like *Candida parapsilosis*, or *glabrata*. Sometimes symptoms can also be caused by moulds like *Aspergillus niger* or *Geotrichum* (milk mould).

*Candida albicans* is, however, the species responsible for the majority of infections in humans.

At least one-third of healthy individuals carry the *Candida* fungus –in the mouth, the intestine or the vagina (See references 1,2,3,4 at end). This prevalence without symptoms, means that *Candida* can be considered a member of the normal microflora of human beings (See reference 5 at end).

In normal circumstances, *Candida* are very small in number compared to the good, micro-flora and therefore cause no symptoms. However, if the number of *Candida* increase beyond their normal levels, they can become troublesome to the very delicate microflora balance in the large bowel.

One of the reasons that *Candida albicans* is a problem is because it can take two forms. For most of the time it exists as a single-celled yeast, but sometimes it converts to a network of many cells which grow tubes that make it more effective in penetrating human tissues and becoming a pathogenic invader.

So *Candida* can exist in different forms which may co-exist together. The ability to change form, which can occur quickly, (See reference 10 at end) makes it easier for *C. albicans* to resist the body's various defence mechanisms.

*Candida* infection can cause problems at two levels. The first is a superficial infection known as 'thrush' which may occur in the mouth or vagina. It may also occur on the skin.

The second is systemic *Candidiasis* where the *Candida* cells find their way into the bloodstream. This usually only occurs if there is damage to the skin or mucosal surfaces (ie of the intestine which may be termed as leaky gut).

Once there, they have the ability to form colonies in any part of the body.

## **Typical symptoms of an intestinal *Candida* overgrowth**

When an uncontrolled overgrowth of *Candida* or other fungi occurs in the intestinal tract, you can get many and sometimes seemingly unrelated symptoms.

The most common is heavy bloating, especially after eating. Diarrhoea or constipation may also be part of the picture; frequently these alternate.

However, different symptoms like nausea and acid regurgitation can also be present, as can extreme tiredness, lethargy, sweet craving, IBS, depression, allergies, recurrent colds, eczema, palpitations, recurrent vaginal thrush, recurrent cystitis and even more.

## **Why does Candida cause all these symptoms?**

Once Candida or other fungi have managed to overgrow our healthy intestinal flora, they usually grow from harmless round cells into filament shapes as I have mentioned earlier. These develop the ability to cling to our intestinal walls and they can be very persistent.

An important part of our immune system is located in our intestines. Here, white blood cells get their training to distinguish bad from good and then they migrate to many other parts of the body to do their work. The fungal overgrowth can irritate this system heavily and may cause the immune system to react allergically to different substances, especially foods.

The local irritation can also cause the “tight junctions” between the gut wall cells to become leaky (Leaky Gut Syndrome), so that food not properly digested can slip into the blood stream and also cause allergic reactions.

In addition to this, fungi give off gas and toxins, especially when they are well fed. The gas results in heavy bloating, especially after a rich meal in carbohydrates. The toxins can stress the liver and nervous system, thus causing the chronic tiredness.

## **Why do we get Candida and why is it increasing?**

Usually our own friendly bacteria keep fungi in our intestines at bay. Just sometimes our little helpers are weakened, for example by treatments with antibiotics, cortisone, hormones, other drugs or too much sugar in our diet, or our immune system is weak for some reason. In this case the fungi can cause symptoms to rise rapidly.

The increase in Candida overall is probably due to the greater use of antibiotics that disturb the microflora. Less good bacteria means a greater opportunity for Candida to grow in numbers and cause infection. (See references 4.6.12 at end).

Unfortunately antibiotics kill bacteria but leave fungi intact.

The greater use of corticosteroids and other immunosuppressive agents that alter the functioning of the immune system may increase the influence of Candida infection.

Those conditions that are associated with a weakened immune system such as leukaemia and the HIV virus are much more likely to develop Candidiasis.

## **3. Getting to grips with Candida quickly with some specific food supplements**

Of course diet is going to be important in helping to overcome Candida and in keeping it under control. This can take some time because some re-adjustments will need to be made in most cases.

Later on in this report I do look at your diet in more detail.

However, whilst you are getting ready to make these adjustments, one of the quickest ways you can make in-roads to getting Candida under control is the use of some natural food supplements.

Below I am going to mention five specific nutrients that help to kill off candida and clear them away through your digestive system.

These ingredients are natural and safe to take long term which is why I am recommending them.

## **Probiotics**

The first thing to supplement with is healthy bacteria or ‘probiotics.’ The most simple way to do this is to choose a good quality probiotic formula with a number of different probiotic strains.

Ever since the first days of your life intestinal bacteria have been colonising your bowel. Over the years they have become adapted to your nutritional habits and to your intestinal condition – for better and for worse.

So, take a good probiotic capsule daily as the good bacteria helps to suppress the growth of the Candida. The inhibition of Candida by probiotic bacteria in the intestinal and vaginal tracts represents a key, first-line defence against mucosal and systemic Candidiasis.

Probiotics are a vital addition to anti-fungal nutrients and reduce the risk of recurrence. The use of probiotics can also help to fortify natural resistance of the gut microflora to *Candida albicans*, particularly if antibiotics are used.

Next in importance to the probiotics are the anti-fungals, those natural ingredients that work directly on reducing the fungus in your system. I like to recommend those natural anti-fungals that are safe and can be taken long term if this is necessary. I am recommending two anti-fungals: garlic and grapefruit extract.

## **Garlic**

Garlic is a member of the Liliaceae family which includes onions, chives and leeks. Garlic has been used medicinally for many years due to its antimicrobial activity.

The active constituent of garlic is the compound allicin which is formed when garlic cloves are crushed.

Allicin has been shown to prevent the transition from the yeast form of *C. albicans* to the hyphal (filamentous) form (see reference 25 at end). For this reason, garlic

could therefore be effective in preventing Candida from becoming invasive and getting into the bloodstream.

Garlic has traditional dietary and medicinal applications as an anti-infective agent. There is plenty of evidence of the antimicrobial activity of fresh and freeze-dried garlic extracts against many bacteria, viruses and fungi including Candida albicans.

## **Grapefruit Seed Extract**

Grapefruit seed extract derived from grapefruit contains a number of bioflavonoids (semi essential nutrients) contained within the peel, flesh and seeds of the fruit. It has been known for some time that this extract has antimicrobial and antifungal activities but these are natural compounds that are powerful antioxidants which can protect the intestinal tract and this in turn can help prevent any existing Candida from becoming invasive.

Grapefruit is an excellent anti-fungal and one of the reasons I like it is because it is completely non-toxic and it does not affect the beneficial intestinal flora. Grapefruit has been used in the treatment for Candida for many years and it is better tolerated than most antifungals. It is also non-allergenic even to people with citrus allergies.

## **Psyllium husks**

To support the action of the anti fungal you need a good, detoxifying, soluble fibre like Psyllium husks. It is virtually impossible to clear Candida if you are constipated or have consistent diarrhoea and Psyllium husks have the unique properties of being helpful in a natural way for both conditions.

I always refer to psyllium husks as the ‘Rolls Royce’ of fibres because they are so gentle yet so effective.

They absorb 25 times their own weight in water and because of this, they form a soft, absorbent gel. As this winds its way through your digestive system, it helps to ‘mop up’ Candida that is being ‘killed off’ by the anti fungals.

This is an important process because having ‘dead’ yeast cells hanging around can make you feel rough for a while. Anything you can do to speed up their elimination can only be helpful.

I know of no other fibre that has the cleansing properties of Psyllium.

## **Turn off the bloating and bad gas with digestive enzymes**

This is the next nutrient category I am recommending.

Many people with Candida have bloating and gas. Taking the probiotics as

mentioned earlier will help this situation but taking a good digestive enzyme complex is something else you can do.

As well as helping with gas and bloating, digestive enzymes also help with acid indigestion/reflux and lactose intolerance.

Whilst talking about digestion, let's talk about how you chew your food. The more thoroughly you chew your food, the easier it is for your stomach and your whole digestive system to break it down and absorb from it much needed nutrients.

As the old Zen saying goes, 'The early bird may catch the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.'

In other words there is no need to rush when it comes to eating. Don't rush your food and always give yourself a few minutes of rest when you have finished a meal.

Although the process of chewing will increase the production of digestive enzymes, we also rely on our food to contain enzymes as well. There is now plenty of evidence to suggest that much of our food today is lacking in active enzymes. So to be sure, taking a digestive enzyme supplement is a good precaution. .

Good, efficient digestion will enhance the activities of any anti-fungals used.

If your food is broken down more effectively then this means less fermentation and bloating after eating and – as a result - this means less food for the Candida to flourish on.

## **4. How you can use diet to support the actions of the supplements in reducing yourself of Candida**

Often the advice is given to treat Candida overgrowth with a strict sugar and carbohydrate free diet. As these fungi live on sugar and carbohydrates this type of restriction will certainly reduce the number of cells but in most cases it can't reverse the fungi's ability to cling to the intestinal walls. Candida will use its fungal ability to rest when it is starved and start replicating again when its food supply gets better.

When conditions are favourable for these fungi, they can switch to protein digestion anyway, leaving us with an impossible dietary challenge. This means that although a healthy diet will help, it will not, on its own, eradicate an overgrowth of Candida.

This is why the use of anti-fungal supplements as mentioned in the last chapter is so important.

There are however, certain guidelines with your diet that you should follow to limit the potential damage from Candida. Below I am going to offer you some guidelines on the type of diet you should follow.

Please note that this is a diet that is good for your general health. For this reason I am advocating you adopt this diet as an on-going lifestyle change. In my view it does not make sense to go on a strict, healthy anti-candida diet for four weeks and then lapse back into a bad diet afterwards.

The most important thing is to keep yourself fit and healthy and to keep your immune system strong. The stronger and fitter you are, the less likely it is for Candida to take over.

Below I am going to recommend some ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts.’

As with all things, there is a balance to be had here. What I am recommending you do is to move steadily to a diet that incorporates more of the ‘do’s’ and less of the ‘don’ts.’

A good diet will help support the actions of the food supplements I’ve mentioned earlier.

- As far as your diet is concerned, you must reduce sugar and sugary foods as far as you can as Candida thrives on it. Keep on with the healthy carbohydrate like whole grains, but simple sugars as found in cakes, chocolate and sweets should be completely avoided. As far as commercial fruit juices are concerned, they are fine but try and water them down a little. Fizzy drinks are perhaps worst of all, so try and avoid these completely. Yeast like fungi need to have a source of organic carbohydrates to live on. Their easiest supply is the organic carbohydrate in the form of short chain sugars, like our household sugars or fruit sugar. The more sugars they have available the better they thrive. For this reason you have to avoid short chain carbohydrates like glucose, fructose, household sugars, malt sugar, all kinds of sweets, chocolate, sweet juices and other sweet drinks, white flour products and jams in your daily nutrition. In fact, all I am recommending you do is have a healthy diet so it really shouldn’t be that onerous.
- Avoid milk as far as possible as lactose promotes *Candida albicans*. Use sheep and goat’s milk instead. Other milk substitutes like rice and soya milk are fine.
- Try and avoid foods with yeast where possible. Keep bread down to a minimum ie no more than 2-3 slices per day and go for wholewheat/grain

and rye bread. There are plenty of yeast free biscuits available in your local health food store.

- Whilst you are trying to rid yourself of Candida, it is good advice to refrain from – or at least reduce - alcohol as the yeast content will just encourage yeast growth and fermentation.
- With your diet generally, eat fresh food as far as possible, particularly lots of vegetables. Keep up reasonable levels of fruit which is so healthy for you. However, as fruit contains sugar naturally, it may cause a ‘flare up’ so be vigilant. A diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables will help to strengthen your immune system. Reducing animal fat will also help this process. Try to eat meat no more than three times per week. Olive oil on the other hand is a good anti-fungal so use that on your salads and for light cooking. If you are eating pasta then go for wholewheat.
- So, all I am really saying is to keep your diet as healthy as possible so that your immune system is as strong as possible.

### **Some recommended foods:**

- Potatoes, brown rice, brown pasta and buckwheat.
- Full grain bread, crisp bread, rye bread, sugar free wholewheat bread
- Not so sweet fruits (apples, lemons, grapefruits)
- Fruit low on carbohydrates like strawberries or raspberries (both have low GI (glycaemic index) and GL (glycaemic load).
- Meat and fish generally OK but not in batter or breadcrumb coat. As I have mentioned before, meat perhaps no more than three times per week.
- Egg dishes (but no milk)
- Natural yoghurt
- All kinds of vegetables and salads are crucial and must play a big part in your anti-candida diet. Use olive oil and/or flaxseed oil on salads
- Nuts in moderation. Almonds, brazil nuts and walnuts are the best ones.
- Lots of fresh water.
- For sweeteners you can use xylitol to help you to reduce normal sugar.
- Coffee and tea in moderation. Opt for herbal teas if possible.
- Avoid alcohol as much as possible, but moderately dry wines would be preferable to sweeter wine.

## **Some foods to avoid:**

- White rice and white pasta
- Yeast and all foods with yeast if you are sensitive to yeast
- Any type of white bread and white flour
- Sweet fruits like grapes, sweet pears, peaches, oranges, bananas, dates and plums should be avoided for four weeks or so,
- Dried fruit
- Fruit yoghurts
- Glucose, household sugar, malt sugar, fructose
- All cakes, sweets, biscuits and custard
- Sugar substitutes like sorbitol, mannitol, fizzy drinks like lemonades and cola, sweet wines, beer, sweet liquors.

You might be very concerned that you will find it extremely hard to avoid sugars, but you have to consider that your need for sugars will go down rapidly once the Candida is eliminated.

It is very important to sweep out the accumulated yeast cells with good soluble fibres like psyllium husks. These plant fibres mechanically eliminate the accumulated yeast cells from the intestines. This is especially efficient when you eat fibre several times a day. Fibre also encourages a faster digestion, which is important to get the Candida out of your intestines and has the additional advantage of making you feel full. This is why I believe that the psyllium husks are so important.

## **Some extra tips:**

- Remember, the healthier you are the less likely Candida will get a hold, so take your food seriously and try and eat healthily. This means eating natural, unprocessed foods whenever possible.
- Eat three meals per day and snack in between if hungry. This helps to balance blood sugar. Focus on having a good breakfast and just a small evening meal and try not to eat after 7.00pm.
- Try to eat when relaxed. Focus on chewing your food thoroughly. This helps to release more digestive enzymes which in turn means better absorption of nutrients from your food. Also, if your food is broken down properly this reduces the stress on your digestive system and the chance of bloating. A more efficient and healthy digestive system means less chance of Candida establishing itself.

## **Some daily menu suggestions:**

If you are looking for ideas, please choose one option of the following suggestions for each meal.

### **Breakfast suggestions**

- Bio- yoghurt smoothie (3 tbsp sunflower or pumpkin seed, handful of berries rice/ oat/ goats milk)
- Live natural yoghurt or sugar free soya yoghurt
- Porridge: use wholemeal oats, rice, millet or quinoa flakes etc. and top with ground up seeds and natural yoghurt. If you need something sweet use good quality (local) honey.
- Natural organic bio yoghurt with fruit of your choice, plus ground seeds such as pumpkin, sesame or sunflower
- Oats soaked overnight in apple juice and soya milk.
- Scrambled or poached eggs with tomatoes, mushrooms and rye bread

### **Mid-Morning Snack**

- Fruit like apple with cottage cheese.
- A palmful of pumpkin seeds, almonds, walnuts or similar
- Half an avocado
- Organic corn chips and hummus
- A couple of oat biscuits and hummus

### **Lunch**

- Smoked mackerel or grilled fish with steamed vegetables or salad
- Jacket potato (or sweet potato) with cottage cheese, tuna, hummus, bean.
- Falafels and salad
- Rye bread sandwich/ wholemeal pitta/ tortilla wrap stuffed with avocado, alfalfa , pine nuts or chicken
- Cottage cheese, chicken or tuna fish salad
- Soups: vegetable, chicken and vegetable, Lentil and vegetable etc. plus rye or gluten free bread
- Salad Nicoise, chicken Caesar salad or goats cheese salad
- Mixed salad with beans (if the beans make you too windy, take the sea veg kombu)

### **Mid Afternoon Snack**

- A piece of fruit plus a few nuts or seeds
- A palmful of mixed nuts and seeds
- Two oatcakes with tahini, guacamole or avocado dip

- Rice cake with hummus or nut spread ( unsalted and sugar free)
- Cottage cheese and two oatcakes or rice cake

## **Dinner**

- Fish, turkey or chicken with at least 3 vegetables and brown or wild rice
- Wholemeal rice or noodles with stir-fried chicken or prawns
- Tofu and mixed vegetable stir –fry, including red peppers, carrots, French beans, peas, mangetouts (if in season), ginger, onions, garlic, mushrooms
- Thai green curry with chicken, brown basmati rice and vegetables
- Roasted vegetables with goats cheese, mozzarella or feta cheese

## **Drinks**

- Herbal teas – camomile, lime leaf or valerian to help to sleep, lemon and ginger
- Green tea – has little caffeine and helps the liver function
- Red bush or rooibosh tea (the most similar taste to real tea when you add a drop of soya or normal milk)
- Fruit teas
- Filtered or bottled water

## **Interesting Books for Recipes**

- The Food Doctor by V. Edgson & I. Marber
- The Optimum Nutrition Cookbook, Patrick Holford and Judy Ridgway
- The Gourmet Nutritional Therapy Cookbook, Linda Luzco

## **5. Conclusions**

Improving your diet and taking anti-fungals will not work overnight. A well-entrenched Candida infection can take time to control and getting results will vary from individual to individual. You will need patience and determination to succeed.

However if you improve your diet to one that supports your immune system, increase your probiotic bacteria intake and persevere with some safe anti-fungals then you should be rewarded with some significant improvements in symptoms.

This therapy requires your co-operation and discipline. Your therapist will advise you to take certain supplements, keep an appropriate diet and proper hygiene measures and advise you on anti-relapse precautions. Only when you combine all of these will you achieve your objectives.

A healthy intestinal flora and a strong gut immune system are the most important allies in our fight against Candida.

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