

A person wearing a blue shirt, dark pants, and a yellow and black patterned beanie is climbing a steep, reddish-brown rock face. The climber is positioned on the left side of the frame, with their body angled towards the rock. A rope is visible running vertically along the rock face. The rock surface is textured and shows some yellowish-green lichen or mineral deposits. The background is dark, suggesting a cave or a shaded area.

CANDIDA AND HOW TO BEAT IT!

Anti-Candida
Four-Point Plan

by Erica White

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Candidiasis, otherwise known as yeast infection, is an infestation of the common yeast *Candida albicans* which is found in every human being in small amounts but, under certain conditions, grows out of control and migrates from the colon to any other tissue in the body causing many different symptoms, both physical and mental. Particular factors which encourage this to happen include stress, antibiotics, steroid treatments (including hormonal intervention such as the Pill, HRT, IVF), alcohol and stimulants (including tea, coffee, chocolate and cola), together with a diet high in refined carbohydrates, especially sugar, and the wide-spread use of antibiotics and hormones in the animals we eat. Even some painkillers are responsible; some contain caffeine, a stimulant which encourages the growth of candida, and others (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) destroy friendly bacteria, which in turn encourages candida to thrive. We therefore have a modern epidemic of yeast-related health problems which is largely due to the over-use of medicines, the contraceptive pill and HRT, together with the high sugar content of our present-day diet and the stress of modern life.

When candida spreads and thrives in the gastrointestinal tract, it changes into a fungal form which is able to break through the intestinal wall leaving it porous, and this allows toxins, microbes and tiny particles of incompletely-digested proteins to leak through from the digestive tract into the blood-stream. Not only does this lead to problems of food sensitivity but it also places a heavy load on the immune system, creating a vicious circle as it weakens the body's fight against candida and other invaders. Candida is able to migrate to any area of the body causing a wide variety of symptoms, and it especially tends to colonise in tissues which are already inflamed or damaged. It is not surprising that candida sufferers often say they 'feel ill all over'.

Unfortunately, treating candida is fraught with difficulties because, as it is destroyed, it releases a great many toxins in whichever areas of the body it has colonised so that symptoms seem to be getting worse. In addition, there can be an increase in general aches and pains, digestive problems, woolly-headedness, depression and anxiety. This is known as 'die-off reaction' and it needs to be carefully controlled in order to minimise the unpleasant effects. At the same time, it is important to follow nutritional advice for supporting the liver's detoxification processes.

A suitable strategy is required – all four points of a four-point plan. But before you consider that this might be what you need to do, why don't you complete the Score Sheet on this web site? This checks out your current possible candida-related symptoms and also your history of factors which predispose to candida, so if you are uncertain as to whether or not you do have a candida problem, the Score Sheet will help to show you – and also give you an idea of its severity. The Score Sheet is a very much simplified version of the scoring system used in the Nutritionhelp system, but it is sufficient to point you in the right direction. Whatever your starting point on the candida Score Sheet, the aim is to bring it down to zero – or at least below 10. And that's where the Four-Point Plan comes in.

Anti-Candida Four-Point Plan

1. **Starve the yeast** in your intestines with a strict anti-candida diet. Be prepared that you might experience an initial increase in symptoms when candida starts to be starved to death. This is 'die-off reaction' caused by extra toxins being released from dead candida - and therefore indicates that you are moving in the right direction. Take comfort from the fact that for most people this initial die-off effect is usually much improved by the end of the first month. So what does the anti-candida diet involve? Well, first of all it is absolutely essential to avoid all types of sugar – including fructose in fruit and lactose in

milk. In addition, it is essential to avoid all foods containing yeast (e.g., yeasted bread, yeast spreads and gravy mixes, also anything fermented (e.g., vinegar, alcohol, soy sauce), anything containing mould or fungus (cheese, mushrooms), and all stimulants (e.g., tea, coffee, chocolate, cola). This might seem drastic but in fact, with a little help and imagination, life can still be both liveable and enjoyable! Full details of foods to be avoided and of those which can be enjoyed are provided in the Candida Info Pack (free of charge on this web site) and over 300 delicious recipes are given in my Beat Candida Cookbook (Thorsons).

2. **Support your immune system** by taking a supplement programme of vitamins and minerals, preferably tailor-made to meet your own specific requirements. The initial levels of nutrients should be taken for three months, after which a review of the situation will hopefully show improvements in health so that the supplement programme may be reduced. As successive reviews can be expected to show continuing improvement, eventually all that will be needed (except in special situations) is a maintenance programme based on a good multivitamin/mineral supplement. However, you need to remember that taking vitamins and minerals at appropriate levels will help to strengthen your immune system, which in turn will be able to fight more strongly to bring candida under control, leading to potential 'die-off reaction', just as can happen when starting on the anti-candida diet.

Don't believe anyone who tells you that you can get all the vitamins and minerals you need from a healthy diet! Even if you really know what should be included in a healthy diet (and what should be avoided), much of our food today is depleted of nutrients and contaminated with chemicals, making it virtually impossible to provide your body with the nutrients it needs to be able to work efficiently. In this day and age, food supplements have a very important part to play – especially if your nutritional status is in a bad way to start with, as is almost certainly the case in people suffering from yeast infection. And it's impossible to win your fight against candida, even if you strictly follow the diet and take anti-fungal supplements, unless you also take steps to improve your nutritional status to ensure an efficient immune system.

3. For the first month or so, keeping to the anti-candida diet and taking immune-boosting vitamins and minerals is all you should do, because adding Points 3 and 4 of the Four-Point Plan from the start is likely to make die-off reaction extremely unpleasant. However, after a month or so on the diet and supplement programme to allow time for initial die-off symptoms to settle down, you will probably feel ready to **introduce natural anti-fungal supplements**. It is best to know what you're doing with anti-fungals, because different ones are appropriate for specific situations. Information about different types of anti-fungals is given, free of charge, if you register for the Candida Info Pack through this web site. Start with a low level and increase gradually, as die-off symptoms allow. *(NB. No type of antifungal supplement should be taken if you have colitis, gastritis or ulcerative conditions of the colon. Until these conditions have healed, you should avoid the third part of the Four-Point Plan, concentrating solely on the other three points. Antifungals should also not be taken if you are pregnant or breast feeding.)*
4. At the same time as introducing anti-fungals, you should also start taking a **reputable probiotic supplement** to provide beneficial bacteria which will help to redress the balance of microbes in your intestines, and take one capsule twice daily.

Bringing candida under control is not easy nor is it necessarily pleasant but, with commitment and perseverance, it can certainly be done. When general improvements suggest that candida is under control, and this is confirmed by a drop in your candida score to below 10, a carefully-controlled diet-relax experiment can be tried, just for one month, to see whether or not this will encourage a return of symptoms. If the experiment goes well, antifungal supplements may then be discontinued but it is wise to stay on a maintenance programme of vitamins and minerals and essential to return to the strict anti-candida diet for *a further year* in

order to consolidate the newly-established healthy balance of bacteria which will just have been achieved in your intestines.

This follow-on year pays real dividends because, after that, it should be safe to leave aside the anti-candida diet. However, it is valuable to see the whole regime as an opportunity to learn how to enjoy eating healthily because this will lay a foundation for the best possible health in the years to come. Taste buds will have totally changed so, hopefully, anyone who has once experienced the miseries of yeast infection will never again give in to the temptation to consume sugar, stimulants or pre-packaged junk foods!

One final piece of advice: rid your home of mould or damp and regularly clean around double-glazed windows. Also, find foster homes for all your much-loved house plants. Mould from their soil becomes airborne in your home and not only causes unpleasant symptoms in someone who has an overgrowth of yeast but places a load on the immune system which slows down your body's ability to bring candida under control.

So, if by now you're convinced (or even just fairly certain) that you have a candida battle on your hands, why don't you download all the help that's available in the Candida Info Pack? When you are rid of all those debilitating health problems that currently keep you feeling ill, you'll be so glad you did!

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