

Vaginitis: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

Increased volume of vaginal secretions

Abnormal color, consistency, or odor of vaginal secretions Vaginal and vulval itching, burning, or irritation

Pelvic area may show Patchy redness, and the vaginal mucosa may be inflamed Painful urination or pain with intercourse

QUICK REVIEW

TREATMENT SUMMARY

Since approximately ninety percent of all cases of vaginitis are due to candida, trichomonas, or gardnerella infections, the following recommendations are primarily directed toward treatment of these organisms. Immune support (through proper diet, nutritional supplementation, and botanical medicines) is an important aspect of the therapy. In recurrent infections, please follow the recommendations given in the chapter IMMUNE SUPPORT.

General Recommendations

1. Consult a physician for accurate diagnosis.
2. Treatment failures may be due to incorrect diagnosis, re-infection, failure to treat predisposing factors, or resistance to the treatment used.
3. In all cases of vaginitis, it is important to use live *Lactobacillus* preparations to reestablish a healthy colony of these desirable organisms in the vagina.
4. Sexual activity should be avoided during treatment to prevent reinfection and to reduce trauma to inflamed tissues. If this is not possible, at least assure that condoms are used.
5. In recurrent cases, consider having sexual partners treated.
6. Wear cotton underwear.

Diet

For all causes of vaginitis, a nutrient-dense diet is recommended. All refined foods and simple carbohydrates should be eliminated. The focus should be on high-quality whole foods. If food allergies are suspected, allergens should be determined and eliminated.

Nutritional Supplements

- High-potency multiple vitamin and mineral formula according to the guidelines given in the chapter SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES
- *Lactobacillus sp.*: one to two billion live organisms per day

Local Treatment

Douches and saturated tampons are effective methods of achieving high concentrations of therapeutic agents in the vagina. The following agents are useful in treatment of the common forms of vaginitis. The list is by no means exhaustive.

Only the agents that have been mentioned in several articles or texts are included. Many other agents are doubtlessly also effective. Choose one or more of the agents below; do not try to use all at once. The variety provides alternatives for use in resistant cases.

- Betadine: various gels, suppositories, and fluids are available; a 1:100 dilution in a retention douche kills most organisms within 30 seconds
- Boric Acid Caps: 600 mg placed in capsules

Repeated use may cause irritation, and use for more than seven days may result in problems from systemic absorption

- Gentian Violet: swab or soak tampon as described in Sensitivity reactions are common, and staining of clothes can occur if a pad is not used

- *Lactobacillus sp.*: dissolve enough in 10 ml of water to provide one billion organisms; use a syringe to douche the material into the vagina