

Gerson Institute Position on Candida

Definition, Etiology and Symptoms

Candida albicans is a yeast found in the mouth, lower digestive tract, vagina and skin. Normally its presence is not a problem; it survives in a controlled balance with “good bacteria” and other organisms in and on our bodies. Candida infections occur when this symbiotic relationship with other organisms is disturbed. If bacteria and other competing flora die or are eliminated, there is more food for the candida, which then begins to grow uncontrollably. Once candida begins to spread and reproduce, it becomes damaging to the host by becoming a fungal infective agent and spreading throughout the body.

Other intestinal organisms can be killed by a number of ways, mostly due to commonly prescribed medications. Frequently antibiotics, steroid hormones, and oral contraceptives are responsible for disrupting the natural balance within our bodies. Also a body burden of mercury can keep the candida around as it tries to sequester the mercury through methylation. Patients are most at risk after a recent operation, when suffering prolonged neutropenia (when neutrophils are depleted for long periods of time), and prolonged broad-spectrum antibiotic use. Also, HIV and AIDS patients have candida or related infections as a recurring problem due to their depleted immune system.¹

Prolonged stress causing high cortisol levels can also be a contributing factor.

Candida, once out of control, can cause a number of systemic problems. Respiratory problems (coughing, wheezing) and digestive problems (bloating, gas, diarrhea) are common symptoms. Other problems include interference with the central nervous system, generalized fatigue, and loss of libido.²

Conventional Treatment and Potential Shortcomings

The first step usually taken to control candida infections is to eliminate all sugars from one’s diet, including fruit and vegetable sources. Drug treatment usually consists of fungicides, either topically for skin lesions or a systemic antifungal, fluconazole, taken orally. This drug is not without side-effects³ and an increasingly common problem is recurrent candidiasis, even after a successful round of antifungal drugs has temporarily curbed the infection. As mentioned earlier, this is common in patients presenting fully developed AIDS, but we are seeing many patients that have recurrent candidiasis problems that are not HIV positive. The underlying problem, an impaired immune system is most likely at the core of both AIDS related and nonrelated recurrent infections.

¹ *Current Medical Diagnosis & Treatment*, 36th Edition, Revised 1997. Edited by Lawrence M Tierney, Jr., Stephen J McPhee, and Maxine A. Papadakis. Edited Appleton & Lange, Stamford, CT. Copyright 1997. Page 1356.

² The Burton Goldberg Group, *Alternative Medicine- the Alternative Guide*. Future Medicine Publishing, Inc. 1994, pg 587

³ Get cites from PDR

Candida and the Gerson Therapy

At first, many patients take issue with the Gerson Therapy and its high fruit and juice content, as this goes against the low sugar diet most conventional practitioners advise. While some modification is made to the juice regimen, the bulk of the juices contain not simple sugars but complex carbohydrates which are not immediately available to the yeast as food. With candida patients, specific modifications include replacing two to three of the apple/carrot juices with green juices, which are much lower in simple sugars and omitting the apple from the carrot/apple juice. Fruit should be avoided in the beginning.

The coffee enemas are particularly helpful toward eliminating the intestinal candida as well as the other intestinal disturbances including gas and bloating. Insufflation of ozone (30cc of a mixture of 90% oxygen 10% ozone, introduced into the rectum) is an adjuvant therapy that seems to be of great therapeutic benefit with this diagnosis. Along with the fresh raw juices and the support for the immune system, the raw salads and vegetables of the Gerson Therapy provide optimum conditions in the intestines for mechanical cleaning and the growth of healthy flora. The therapy also provides optimum nutrition through the juices, along with a large supply of fresh enzymes and beta carotene, all allowing the body to control the candida and reestablish a symbiotic relationship between organisms within the body.

Many doctors and health experts recommend the use of a number of natural products Tahebo Tea (also called Pau d'Arco, or Lapacho), fresh raw garlic, grapefruit seed extract and probiotics against candida.