

# Ivy Grove Surgery

## Minor Illness Leaflet #4 – Vaginal Thrush

Dear

We have provided this leaflet following your recent consultation on . The NHS aims to empower all patients to self-care and we hope that this leaflet will help you to manage your condition in the future.

### **Name of condition**

Thrush.

### **What it is**

Thrush is a common complaint that affects more than half of women at some time in their lives. It is caused by a fungal yeast called Candida which harmlessly lives on the skin and around the vaginal area. When conditions change the yeast can multiply and enter the vagina causing infection. Thrush is more common in moist, warm, airless areas of the body such as the vagina and is also common in the mouth, groin and armpits for the same reasons.

### **Symptoms to expect**

- Vaginal discharge which is usually thick and creamy white in colour sometimes like cottage cheese
- Itching or soreness around the vaginal area and sometimes redness
- Sometimes discomfort when passing urine or during sexual intercourse

### **Self-care**

- Usually we do not need to see patients with symptoms of thrush or do any tests to confirm the diagnosis
- Treatment can be taken based on the common symptoms (see 'Treatment' below)
- Often if symptoms are mild and you are otherwise healthy symptoms can clear after a few days without any specific treatment
- Wearing loose fitting cotton clothing, avoiding any perfumed products and soaps in that area and avoiding biological washing powder and softener often helps
- In those who are more likely to develop thrush (see 'At-risk groups' below) or in those with more troublesome symptoms treatment is usually required

### **Treatment**

- For most people the first step in treatment is a vaginal tablet (pessary) and cream to apply on the area. This can be bought over the counter by most and usually settles symptoms within 7 days
- For those who prefer, an oral tablet can also be bought over the counter which works in a similar way
- Occasionally if symptoms are not typical or do not settle with treatment then we advise an appointment with the practice nurse to take vaginal swabs

### **When to seek further help**

- If you develop any unscheduled vaginal bleeding, abdominal pain, fever or feel unwell in yourself

### **At-risk groups**

- Pregnant
- Diabetics
- Those who have recently had antibiotics
- Those with a poor immune system (e.g., chemotherapy, drugs, cancer)

Get the right help for your condition, visit our online help page at <http://ivy.gs/help>

Written by Dr R Greer, ©2016 Ivy Grove Surgery