



# PUBLIC FACT SHEET

## THRUSH

### What is thrush?

Thrush is a yeast infection in the mouth. It can affect both children and adults.

### How is thrush spread?

Thrush may be spread through the following ways:

- By contact with infected secretions of the mouth, skin or vaginal area.
- By poor hand washing techniques.
- By using contaminated bottles, nipples or pacifiers.
- In adults, it can develop when taking antibiotics.
- Diabetics or people who have a weakened immune system are also more at risk.

### What are possible symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- White, curdy patches on the tongue, roof of mouth and inner cheeks.
- There may be bleeding of the area.
- An infant may refuse to suck because of pain in the mouth, but this is uncommon

### How is thrush diagnosed?

A physician or dentist can diagnose thrush based on an examination of the affected area.

### What is the treatment for thrush?

Treatment is usually by a prescription from your doctor. Medication is swished in the mouth 3-4 times daily after eating. For adults, there is a pill which can be used if the other medication does not work. Improvement is usually seen within one week.

### How can thrush be controlled or prevented?

- Rinse the mouth with plain water after each feeding.
- For bottle-fed infants, replace nipples after infection has begun to clear.
- For breast-fed infants, the mother should use an antifungal medication on her nipples. This prevents the mother from spreading thrush back to the baby.
- Wash hands after diaper changes.
- Frequently wash toys that may be sucked on.

### For more information on thrush:

Ottawa County Health Department

[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)

Medline Plus/National Institutes of Health

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000626.htm>