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CHRONIC CANDIDA INFECTION

Candida, Also known as Thrush, is a fungus which is usually known for the infection it causes in the vagina in women. However, there is increasing evidence that an infection in the intestines with candida can cause prolonged ill- health, Candida, and other fungal infection, seems to be part of conditions such as M.E., Post-viral fatigue syndrome and multiple food sensitivities.

The candida organism is present in normal healthy people, but in an amount about the size of a pea in total. In addition, in health, the organism is in a yeast-like form, in which the cells are roughly spherical. But due to external factors (stress, taking hormones or antibiotics, and hormonal changes), the candida may develop and, in doing so change it's structure. The cells elongate and become 'mycelial' - forming a cobweb type structure over the lining of the intestine, and producing 'roots' which partially penetrate the lining. This leads to what is popularly known as the 'leaky' intestine, in which whole proteins are absorbed into the circulation instead of being broken down into their constituents before absorption. These proteins in the blood are hence recognised as 'foreign' by the body, and antibodies are formed against them. Hence there develops a food sensitivity.

Unfortunately a dietary approach to this problem, on it's own, is not useful as the sensitivities are constantly changing. Hence a diet which may be right one week may not be right the next week, as new sensitivities will have developed and foods which previously caused a problem may no longer do so.

To confirm the diagnosis there is now a blood test available. This can strongly suggest the presence of candida, and give some indication as to it's severity. This, together with the clinical picture and homoeopathic investigations can make the diagnosis almost certain. The treatment of the condition is in five distinct and different ways, encompassing both orthodox and complementary medicine. None of

these approaches alone is adequate to deal with the problem. The use of all five, at the same time, results in the most rapid resolution of the condition.

The treatments are:

1. Diet. Because the organism feeds on yeast and sugar, a sugar and yeast free diet is essential. Other carbohydrates should be reduced.

2. Anti-Fungal Medication. Several anti-fungal medications are available, but the most powerful (and safest) is amphotericin - also known as "Fungilin". In the right strength this is now unavailable, and Nystatin is the best alternative.

3. De-sensitisation. Patients with candida are often sensitive to the organism itself, and homoeopathic desensitisation can be useful.

4. Homoeopathic Treatment. Commonly the liver and the pancreas are put under some stress as these are the first organs affected by the condition. Homoeopathic medication directed at these organs can help.

As there is a tendency to the development of other food sensitivities, a varied diet, avoiding the too regular ingestion of any one food, is preferable.