

Candida Antibodies

A systemic Candida infection may cause a diverse set of symptoms providing a diagnosis to explore in complex chronic patients. Symptoms include poor concentration, premenstrual syndrome, fatigue, food sensitivities, irritable bowel, cystitis and muscle and joint aches. Although yeast is found in everyone's GIT, problems arise when the ratio of friendly bacteria to harmful microorganism is disturbed. This balance is upset by a modern lifestyle including antibiotic and oral contraceptive use, stress and diets high in sugar and carbohydrates.

The Candida Syndrome

Medically unexplained symptoms account for approximately 20% of primary care consultations and 10% of secondary care referrals. The typical symptom clusters including emotional and mental difficulties, allergic reactions, gastrointestinal distress and urinary tract problems do not fit any traditional disease pattern nor do they have an agreed upon conventional medical diagnosis.

A controversial explanation for at least a subgroup of these poly-symptomatic patients is an immunologic reaction to *Candida albicans*, which has been called 'Candida Syndrome'. As a systemic Candida infection may cause such a diverse set of symptoms, it provides a diagnosis to explore in complex chronic patients.

Table 1: Symptoms and Conditions Associated with Candida

Acne	Depression and mood swings
Autism	Fatigue
Bad breath	Food sensitivities
Bladder and kidney infections	Headaches
Brain fog and poor memory	Indigestion
Chemical sensitivities	Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
Chronic sinus problems	Muscle and joint aches
Cold hands and feet	Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)
Constipation/diarrhoea, bloating and other GIT complaints	Poor immune system
Cravings for sweet and yeasty food	Skin irritations
Decreased libido	Thrush

Candida albicans

Although yeast is found in everyone's GIT, problems arise when the ratio of friendly bacteria to harmful microorganisms is disturbed. A modern lifestyle including antibiotic and oral contraceptive use, stress and high carbohydrate diets can either kill the friendly bacteria which then promote Candida growth or encourage Candida proliferation directly.

Multiple mechanisms may explain how Candida yeast infection can result in such a diverse set of systemic symptoms. Obviously Candida overgrowth can give rise to local yeast infection symptoms as seen in thrush, vaginitis and skin irritations. However, alcohol and toxins released into the bloodstream by the Candida can also produce negative affects. These toxins may lead to the characteristic 'brain fog' and in extreme cases may cause 'the drinkless drunk' (individuals who have high blood alcohol and symptoms of drunkenness without consuming alcohol). In addition, Candida infections may weaken the immune system and increase permeability of the GI mucosal lining. These affects can lead to food intolerances and therefore symptoms such as headaches, asthma, muscle and joint pains as well as irritable bowel.

Table 2: Causes of Candida

Antibiotic use	High alcohol intake
Anti-inflammatory use	High stress levels
Chlorinated water	High sugar diet
Contraceptive pill or HRT use	Immune deficiency
Diabetes	Multiple pregnancies
Estrogen dominance	Steroid use

Candida Testing

Candida infections can be tested by the salivary Candida Antibodies test. The test detects the levels of the antibodies indicating the stage of the condition, i.e. whether there is a current infection (IgA positive) or past infection (IgG positive). In addition the presence of Candida is also tested as a standard part of the Comprehensive Digestive Stool Analysis (CDSA).

Analytes

Candida Antibodies (Salivary): Candida IgA, Candida IgG antibodies

Candida Antibodies/Antigen (Serum): Candida IgA, IgG, IgM and Candida antigen

Specimen Collection Requirements:

Either serum (SST tube) or blood spot.

Result Turnaround Time:

Two weeks after receipt of sample and test fee payment at NutriPATH.



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