Thrush (Oral Candidiasis), Infant

Thrush is a fungal infection caused by yeast (*candida*) that grows in your baby's mouth. This is a common problem and is easily treated. It is seen most often in babies who have recently taken an antibiotic.

Thrush can cause mild mouth discomfort for your infant, which could lead to poor feeding. You may have noticed white plaques in your baby's mouth on the tongue, lips, and/or gums. This white coating sticks to the mouth and cannot be wiped off. These are plaques or patches of yeast growth. If you are breastfeeding, the thrush could cause a yeast infection on your nipples and in your milk ducts in your breasts. Signs of this would include having a burning or shooting pain in your breasts during and after feedings. If this occurs, you need to visit your own caregiver for treatment.

TREATMENT

- The caregiver has prescribed an oral antifungal medication that you should give as directed.
- If your baby is currently on an antibiotic for another condition, you may have to continue the antifungal medication until that antibiotic is finished or several days beyond. Swab 1 ml of the antibiotic to the entire mouth and tongue after each feeding or every 3 hours. Use a nonabsorbent swab to apply the medication. Continue the medicine for at least 7 days or until all of the thrush has been gone for 3 days. Do not skip the medicine overnight. If you prefer to not wake your baby after feeding to apply the medication, you may apply at least 30 minutes before feeding.
- Sterilize bottle nipples and pacifiers.
- Limit the use of a pacifier while your baby has thrush. Boil all nipples and pacifiers for 15 minutes each day to kill the yeast living on them.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The thrush gets worse during treatment or comes back after being treated.
- Your baby refuses to eat or drink.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

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