

Candidiasis: An Initial Indication of A Positive Treatment Approach

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While the article "Candidiasis: Scourge of Arthritics" by Anthony di Fabio that appeared in the January 1995 issue of TLfD was helpful in understanding Candidiasis, it did not clarify the issue of appropriate treatment protocol. Mr. di Fabio's observation is that treatment approaches vary for many reasons, and that there is no set method that is recommended at this time. "Some use diet alone, others use prescription drugs such as Ketoconazole" and some use Candida Purge, (combination of Caprol, Bentonite, Psyllium and Acidophilus). Candida Purge is currently marketed as Acu-Trol products. Mr. di Fabio therefore makes the conclusion that "if Candidiasis is to be effectively and quickly treated, all forms of treatment should be used either at the same time or in as quick succession as medically possible." This conclusion leaves many unanswered questions. There are many different modalities on hand, do we use all of them? Which ones are to be used simultaneously and which ones are to be used in rapid succession?

This fundamental question regarding treatment approaches led me to do a study that would address what treatment methods bring the best outcomes for patients with systemic Candidiasis. The study started in 1991 and followed patients with Candidiasis for a period of two years. The results strongly suggested certain combinations of modalities that work better than others. This article will share the research process, findings, discussion and conclusions from that study.

A 37-item questionnaire designed to elicit feedback on questions relating to the treatment of Candidiasis was given to patients who had recovered from systemic Candidiasis. The questionnaire sought to find answers to several major questions:

- 1. Which treatment regimens (prescription medications, nutritional therapies etc.) were effective in reversing symptoms of systemic Candidiasis?
- 2. Which combination of treatments were most effective?
- 3. of the therapies that were effective, how long did it take before positive effects were felt? How long did it take before one fully recovered? and were there any side effects from these therapies.

Demographics

The sample was selected based upon two criteria. First, they were people diagnosed positive for systemic Candidiasis. Second their symptoms had been reversed or significantly reduced. This conclusion was derived from a self-assessed comparison

rating of symptoms before and after treatment. Of the 70 questionnaires sent to people who met these criteria, 50 (71%) responded . Seventy-four percent were female, 26% male. Age ranged from 18 months to 82 years. Respondents claim to have had symptoms of Candidiasis for a range of 6 to 10 years before they were correctly diagnosed and treated.

90% claim that the predisposing factor leading to their illness was a history of having used either one of the following: several rounds of antibiotics, corticosteroids, or in women, birth control pills.

Treatment modalities used by respondents

Respondents used a combination of treatments ranging from diet, prescription medications, natural herbs, acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathics, colonic, and massage. The products most commonly used were:

<i>Product</i>	<i>(N-50) # of users</i>	<i>Percent using this item</i>
Acidophilus	45	90
Psyllium	45	90
Bentonite	43	86
Caprol	42	84
Garlic	27	54
Nystatin	14	54
Monistat	13	28
Nizoral	10	26
Diflucan	10	20
Caprystatin	7	14
Capricin	6	12
Flagyl	5	10

Other products used by a fewer number of the respondents included: Capronex, Chlorophyll, EDTA Chelation therapy, Homeopathic Sepia, and sulphur, Hydrogen Peroxide baths, Ketoconazole, Lemonade with Cayenne, Lotrimin, Nutrimin, OxyCleanse, Pau d´ Arco Extract, Sunrider Terazol and Yeast Away.

Product Effectiveness

In order to provide a general overview of product effectiveness, a ratio of positive to negative responses for each product was computed. Only the responses to the 10 most used products were tabulated.

<i>Product</i>	<i>Number # of users</i>	<i>Overall Effectiveness</i>
Caprol	42	1.92
Acidophilus	45	1.72
Bentonite	43	1.66
Psyllium	45	1.47
Diflucan	10	.33
Monistat	14	.30
Nystatin	27	.30
Garlic	27	.23
Candida Extract	10	.12

- €A score of 1 indicates an equal ratio of positive to negative responses.
- €A score greater than one indicates a positive ratio.
- €A score less than one indicates a negative ratio.

Ranking of products that were perceived to bring improvement at first, but where symptoms came back after some time

Product	Number # of users	Percent indicating improvement but with recurrence
Monistat	14	42
Nystatin	27	41
Diflucan	10	30
Psyllium	45	29
Caprol	42	26
Bentonite	43	23
Nizoral	13	23
Candida Extract	10	20
Acidophilus	45	11
Garlic	27	11

Monistat (42%), Nystatin (41%) and Diflucan (30%) were ranked the highest out of ten products that gave only short term improvement, and where symptoms recurred after some time.

Ranking of products which were perceived as causing no change in symptoms.

<i>Product</i>	<i>Number of users</i>	<i>Percent indicating no change in symptoms</i>
Candida Extract	10	40%
Garlic	27	37
Nizoral	13	30
Monistat	14	21
Nystatin	27	15
Acidophilus	45	11
Diflucan	10	10
Bentonite	43	7
Psyllium	45	7
Caprol	42	7

Candida Extract (40%), Garlic (37%), and Nizoral (30%) were three products that were tried by our respondents but ranked highest as ones that did not bring any change in symptoms.

Ranking of products which respondents indicated they discontinued because of side effects.

<i>Product</i>	<i>Number of users</i>	<i>Percent indicating discontinuance due to side effects</i>
Nizoral	13	30%
Candida Extract	10	20
Diflucan	10	20
Nystatin	27	19
Garlic	27	15
Monistat	14	7
Bentonite	43	5
Acidophilus	45	2
Psyllium	45	2
Caprol	42	0

Among the products used by respondents, Nizoral, Candida Extract, Diflucan and Nystatin (20-30%) were discontinued most often because of side effects. Caprol, Psyllium, Bentonite and Acidophilus and Monistat (0-7%) were discontinued least often due to undesirable side effects.

Ranking of products based on the indication by users that they have discontinued the products because they are well.

Product	Number of users	Percent who discontinued because they are well
Caprol	42	24%
Bentonite	43	23
Psyllium	45	22
Acidophilus	45	18
Nizoral	13	8
Garlic	27	7
Monistat	14	7
Nystatin	27	7
Candida Extract	10	0
Diflucan	10	0

Conclusions:

Of the ten products discussed above, the combination of Caprol, Bentonite, Psyllium and acidophilus was rated most effective. (These products are referred to as Candida Purge in the article by A. di Fabio mentioned above.) The combination of these four ingredients are found under the label Acu-Trol. These products were rated effective because according to the respondents these products gave significant improvement that was long lasting; they had fewer side effects, and therefore their use could be continued. After three to six months, most of respondents were able to discontinue using them because they had recovered. More than half of those who used this combination indicated initial relief within a few days. Forty-two percent claimed they felt relief within two to three months. They took these products for an average of one year before symptoms completely stabilized.

The other products: Garlic, Nystatin, Monistat, Nizoral and Candida Extract appeared less effective in that they had more side effects. These side effects included severe die-off, this die-off causing headaches, nausea and fatigue that would last for 7 to 10 days were cited as the most common reason for discontinuing use of a product. Although they brought initial improvements, symptoms came back after some time. Among these

products there was an indication that some of them brought no change in symptoms, i.e. no indication that they were getting better.

People who used Nizoral, or Nystatin took three to ten months to feel a difference and 13 months to two years before they improved compared to the three to six months that it took the group using Acu-trol to feel improvement.

Favorable benefits attributed to the use of Acu-trol products

The majority of respondents who took the Acu-trol products reported improvement in gastrointestinal function to be the most valued benefit. Other benefits reported were less bloatedness, fewer bouts of diarrhea/constipation, lessened food cravings and good bowel cleansing. A third of them reported increased energy level, less fatigue, fewer bouts of anxiety/depression, and increased mental alertness, approximately one-third also reported positive changes such as lessened sensitivity to food and environmental allergens. Less than a third had unfavorable effects including abdominal cramping, gassiness, and abdominal bloating. These were considered mild and not a reason for them to discontinue use of products. A few mentioned the texture of the psyllium mix as undesirable but not a reason to forego therapy.

Other treatment modalities used simultaneously with oral fungicides and colon cleansers

The respondents reported having used the following treatments along with a strict diet (yeast-free and sugar-free) and use of fungicides and colon cleansers: Acupuncture, chiropractic manipulation, colonic irrigation, massage. The treatment rated most effective in repairing the effects of Candidiasis was acupuncture which was used by 64% of respondents. Acupuncture's beneficial effects were described as: improvement in energy level, ability to digest food better, less bloatedness, lessened sensitivities to allergens and in general, fewer symptoms. They reported relatively few side effects and that relief was long lasting.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents used chiropractic manipulation, but with mixed results. Half of them claimed it was helpful, and the other half felt there was little or no effect on their symptoms. Colonics were used by 24% of the respondents with very positive results and was highly recommended. Of the 38% who used drugs such as antibiotics and corticosteroids, 78% claimed these caused a worsening of symptoms and therefore discontinued their use.

Diet

Diet that is free from sugar, yeast, fermented food, and alcohol was reported by 70% of subjects as essential in controlling the symptoms of Candidiasis. They also claimed that violating these restrictions brought back symptoms and delayed their recovery process.

The combination of diet, Acu-Trol (Caprol, Bentonite, Psyllium, Acidophilus) and acupuncture used simultaneously, was the treatment combination claimed by the majority (60%) to be most effective in combating the disease. They strongly suggested that use of

fungicides alone without colon cleansers should not be practiced because they caused severe 'die-off' reactions.

Forty percent of them got better by using the combination of strict diet, Acu-trol, and occasional colonics, chiropractic manipulation and or massage. It is fair to conclude that although Candidiasis is difficult to treat and takes a long time for symptoms to reverse, there are treatment combinations that work better than others . Participants in the study strongly suggest the need for an on-going program of preventive maintenance which consists of continued attention to diet, periodic use of acupuncture treatments and Acu-Trol products to control symptoms as they recurred. It is possible to go for months or years without symptoms but illness, stress, poor diet, and use of antibiotics could bring an exacerbation of Candidiasis.

These findings are based on the responses of people who participated in the two and a half year study conducted at the East West Clinic in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. These respondents happened to use the products and procedures listed in the earlier part of this report; it does not negate the possibility that there are other treatment combinations with similar efficacy. However, for the benefit of practitioners who are looking for effective treatment combinations for the patient with even the most severe case of systemic Candidiasis, these findings provide some answers that may be used as guidelines in treating this very challenging disease.