

# Teacher's Guide: Common Infections Module



This Module covers common infections that tend to target women, plus ways to deal with – and better yet – avoid them!

## Module contents:

- Common infections overview
- Yeast infections
  - Recognizing the symptoms
  - Treatment
- Cystitis (AKA: bladder infections or urinary tract infections)
  - Recognizing the symptoms
  - Precautions you can take

## Common Infections pre-quiz answer key

1. False
2. True
3. False

## Common Infections quiz answer key

1. True
2. a
3. True
4. c
5. True



# Common Infections

TAMPAX

*always*

BEINGGIRL

# Common Infections



## Common Infections Pre-Quiz

Read the following statements carefully and circle either True or False for each.

1. Yeast infections are most common in women over 35.

True or False

2. Cystitis is another word for bladder infection.

True or False

3. Urinary tract infections are contagious.

True or False

# Common Infections



Between homework, friends and parents, life can be pretty complex for all young teens. But there are a couple of common ailments that can complicate things for us ladies.

## Got an itch?

Well it may be from those tight jeans you're wearing, but if it gets worse, especially when your jeans have been off for a while, it might be a yeast infection. Yeast infections are most common in teenage girls and women up to 35 years old. Yeast infections are caused by an increase in Candida – yeast found in your body. Normally, harmless bacteria keep it in check. But if these bacteria are reduced, the yeast grows unhindered and WHAM! You've got a yeast infection.

## What if I'm just itchy?

Oh sister, you'll know. Along with the itch you're probably going to have a reddish rash around your vagina and a thick cottage cheese-like white discharge. That's a yeast infection. If you're not sure, ask your doctor. The good news is yeast infections are very treatable.

## Great, now what do I do?

There are a number of over-the-counter medications you can try, but the first thing you should do is see your doctor. She can better tell if it's a yeast infection and recommend a medication for you. If you do get one again, which is likely, you'll know what to do. And of course, prevention is the best medicine. Ironically, taking antibiotics can lead to yeast infections because it kills off the bacteria, good and bad, that controls the yeast growth. Other things that can lead to yeast infections are those tight jeans we were talking about, synthetic underwear or Lycra and spandex, which tends to keep the vaginal area damp, hanging around in a wet bathing suit, douching (without a doctor's prescription) or birth control pills.



- Teens and women under 35
- Candida = the yeast in your body
- Yeast can grow (if not controlled by bacteria) into a yeast infection



Other yeast infection culprits

- Tight jeans
- Panties made from synthetic materials
- Douching (without doctor's prescription)
- Birth control pills



And remember that although a yeast infection is a common vaginal infection, it's only one of several that can cause itching. Most conditions are easily diagnosed and treated — another good reason to see your health care provider.

**Myth:**

Only girls who play sports get yeast infections.

**Fact:**

Nope, anyone can get a yeast infection from boys to babies to your mom.

**It burns when I pee.**

Well, it could be any number of things. Most commonly this symptom is a result of cystitis, an inflammation of the bladder and urethra, AKA a bladder infection or a urinary tract infection. Cystitis is very common and most women experience it sometime in their life. Cystitis can recur and if you've had it once, you'll know the second, third or fortieth time.

Besides the burning when you urinate, you may also run a fever and generally feel lousy. You may have pain and tenderness around your bladder and pelvis. Your urine might be cloudy or smell funky, like a strong ammonia smell. You may also go to the bathroom more often or have an urgent need to urinate with little or no urine coming out. If you experience any combination of these, see your doctor.

**Cranberry juice: your friend**

Once you've been diagnosed with cystitis, you may be prescribed an antibiotic to help kill off the bacteria. For your part you need to flush out your bladder by drinking lots of fluids. It's not a myth,



Cystitis = bladder infection/urinary tract infection

- Burning during urination
- Fever
- Tenderness around pelvis
- Cloudy or funky-smelling urine
- Frequent urination
- Urgent need to urinate (Sometimes with little or no urine!)

If you experience any of these, see your doctor.



cranberry juice (that's 100% juice, not the cocktail) helps keep bacteria from sticking to the walls of your bladder and the fluid itself will make you have to urinate. Try to use the bathroom at least once every three hours. This'll keep your bladder empty and less likely to provide a good environment for bacteria to grow. Also, women have shorter urethras than men so there's less distance for bacteria and germs to travel from the outside to the bladder. Keep yourself clean and dry and, as always, wipe from "front to back" not the other way around.



TAMPAX

*always*

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# Common Infections



## Common Infections Quiz

Read the following questions carefully and circle the most correct answer for each.

1. Yeast infections are most common in teenage girls and women under 35.  
True or False
2. Which of the following are common symptoms of yeast infections?
  - a. Itchiness and a rash
  - b. Weight gain and backache
  - c. Increased IQ and better grades in school
  - d. Dizziness and vomiting
  - e. Paleness and dull hair
3. Cystitis, bladder infection and urinary tract infection are all the same thing.  
True or False
4. A urinary tract infection is:
  - a. Proof that you should wipe back to front
  - b. Unlikely to occur again
  - c. Treatable
  - d. Highly contagious
  - e. Very uncommon
5. Yeast infections and bladder infections can happen to men.  
True or False