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## MYCOTIC VAGINITIS.

**What it is.** The mycotic vaginitis is commonly caused by the candida albicans. The candida is an usual guest of the vagina. Various factors as pregnancy, diabetes, an immunological deficit, prolonged treatments with antibiotics or other medicines, therapies with estro-progestogenics, psychophysical stress make this fungus virulent and foster the rise of the pathology. The vaginitis is contagious, therefore it is easily transmissible with sexual intercourse and it does not often cause particular troubles in the man. For this reason it is also necessary to treat the partner that, as healthy carrier, could further spread the illness. The vaginite has a tendency to relapse.

How it reveals itself. The symptoms are itch and inflammation of the vulva, milky vaginal losses sometimes in clots, mucosa covered by small white spots, frequent and painful urination, swelling of the external genital and painful coition.

**THERAPY.** Is based on the use of antimycotic medicines for topical use such as lavages, vaginal suppositories or ointments and the oral therapy. Therapy often is practised in cycles given to the tendency to relapse. Also the partner must be orally treated with specific products. In the period of the treatment one needs to abstain from sexual intercourse or, in any case, to use the condom.

A correct intimate hygiene always has to respect all the natural defences present on the genital organs, above all of the vagina, because it constitutes the medium between the outside and the internal apparatus and it acts as a barrier against possible aggressors. Structural defences must be kept intact such as the elasticity and the resistance of the mucosa and the chemical defences, essentially constituted by the environmental acidity due to the bacillus of Doderlein.

The first rule for a correct intimate hygiene is a good cleansing of the part, which also brings about a pleasant feeling of freshness. The result can be obtained using products that contain high detergent power substances, but being able to keep the natural acidity of the environment unchanged. Common soaps, for example, although possessing the requisites of good detergents, determine an alkaline type reaction that makes them not suitable for the hygiene of the part. Marseille soap could be used, because it has a neutral action, yet it is better to employ specific acid detergents, conceived for this area of the body.

**During the menstrual period** the intimate hygiene has to be particularly accurate: frequent daily cleansing and vaginal lavages are advisable. For these internal cleansing it is better to use soft cannulas, flexible and rounded, and acid detergents, with a pH around 4. Lavages always are to be carried out slowly and gently. Nowadays women use tampons more and more frequently, because it is invisible and comfortable for those who practise sports, and to

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bathe in the sea. Obviously their use cannot neglect special care, such as not to use them during the night and to change them frequently, always associating a perfect hygiene to their use.

**MENOPAUSE.** The period of the menopause is characterised by the cessation of the reproductive activity and, therefore, of the production of the estrogens; hormones that are also useful to keep the tissues of the genitalia vital and elastic. It occurs a strong decrease of important structural defences, therefore in this period it is extremely important to follow a scrupulous intimate hygiene, so as to prevent the onset of bothering diseases.

**PREGNANCY.** This period requires special intimate hygienic care, above all because of leucorrhoea, which are not pathological, determined by a greater production of mucus. This abundance of secretions could foster the installation of pathogenic germs, therefore an accurate topical cleansing together with a bland disinfectant based on salts of quaternary ammonium, which do not interact with the bacillus of Doderlein is also recommended.

How to choose the intimate detergent.

The choice of the intimate detergent is very important for a correct hygiene of the genitalia and to the maintenance of their health. A good product has to possess the following requisites:

**It must have an acid reaction, with a pH around 5, to respect the natural environmental acidity.** Many products currently on sale are based on lactic acid, normally present in vagina, and they are suitable to the physiological demands

**To possess a moderate antiseptic action,** useful in case of burning or frequent irritations, determined by substances such as the salts of quaternary ammonium, capable to defend the vagina and not to disturb the bacilli of Doderlein

**To possess a deodorant and refreshing action** , not essential perhaps from the clinical point of view, but important for the comfort of the woman

**To contain, when necessary** , vegetable extracts, for example horsetail or camomile, which have a soothing action, useful to eliminate that bothering sensation of local dryness especially present during menopause. These special products are on sale both as solution for lavages and in form of gel.

**To be usable also in particular circumstances,** for example in places where there is no water. To the purpose there are nebulized cleansing substances, which own, beside the requisite of quality, also the practicality of use.



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Nowadays the products of good quality on sale that can be used with tranquillity are numerous. Nowadays the female intimate hygiene is associated to the concept of prevention of pathologies during the whole life-span, from infancy to the post-menopause.

It must be always adjusted to the different events that naturally follow each other, such as the puberty, the pregnancy, the contraception, which require special care.

The product used for the intimate hygiene has different characteristics according to the specific demands of a determined period.

Antiseptic products will be used during pregnancy or when there are abundant losses; with mechanical contraception systems it will be necessary to use products able to prevent inflammations, while in menopause it is advisable to use intimate detergents able to decrease the feeling of dryness, which will make us feel better and also able to have a serene sexual life.