Oral Thrush

Oropharyngeal candidiasis (oral thrush) is an opportunistic mucosal infection and is unusual in healthy adults.

Prevalence and epidemiology

- Very young (neonates) (5%)
- Very old are (10%)
- diabetes,
- Xerostomia (dry mouth),
- patients who are immunocompromised
- Recent antibiotic therapy,
- Inhaled corticosteroids,
- Ill-fitting dentures.

Aetiology

- Candida albicans (30–60%)
- Denture wearers is even higher.
- It is transmitted directly between infected people or via objects that can hold the organism. Changes to the normal environment in the oral cavity will allow C. Albicans to proliferate.

Clinical Features

- Creamy-white soft elevated patches that can be wiped off revealing underlying erythematous mucosa
- Pain,
- Soreness,
- Altered taste
- A burning tongue
- Lesions can occur anywhere in the oral cavity but usually affect the tongue, palate, lips and cheeks.
- Patients sometimes complain of malaise and loss of appetite.
- In neonates, spontaneous resolution usually occurs but can take a few weeks.
Differential Diagnosis of Mouth Ulcers

Conditions to eliminate

- Minor aphthous ulcers
- Medicine-induced thrush
- Denture wearers Wearing
- Lichen planus
- Underlying medical disorders.
Indicative of Referral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms/signs</th>
<th>Possible danger/reason for referral</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diabetics</td>
<td>May indicate poor diabetic control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration greater than 3 weeks</td>
<td>Unlikely to be thrush and needs further investigation by a doctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immunocompromised patients</td>
<td>Likely to have severe and extensive involvement. Outside community pharmacist’s remit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painless lesions</td>
<td>Sinister pathology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Management

Miconazole

- Daktarin oral gel (miconazole) is available OTC to treat oral thrush.
- Efficient and appears to have clinical cure rates between 80 and 90%.
- Adults and children over 6 years, the gel should be applied 4 times a day.
- Under six the dose is twice a day.
- The gel should be applied directly to the area with a clean finger.
- Occasionally cause nausea and vomiting.
- It can interact with a number of medicines, namely mizolastine, cisapride, triazolam, midazolam, quinidine, pimozide, HMG-coa reductase inhibitors.
- Co-administration of warfarin with miconazole increases warfarin levels markedly and the patient’s (internationalised normalised ratio) INR should be monitored closely.
- Daktarin should be avoided in pregnancy but safe to use whilst breastfeeding.