



RESEARCH ARTICLE

CANDIDA OVERGROWTH SYNDROME: HIDDEN CAUSE OF YOUR EXHAUSTION!!!

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ABSTRACT

"Candida Overgrowth Syndrome" is an upcoming and more of common condition found particularly in youngsters who are on long term broad spectrum antibiotics for the treatment of acne and chronic sinusitis. Candidas are budding yeast cells which normally inhabit our gastrointestinal tract along with the other normal microbial flora. Overgrowth of Candida is made possible by overuse or misuse of antibiotics, a dysfunctional immune system or gastrointestinal distress. The striking feature is that the patients develop too many generalized, gastrointestinal and behavioral symptoms, with all their blood and other diagnostic tests negative. Timely and evidence based diagnosis of "Candida Overgrowth Syndrome" helps in accurate and timely treatment of the patient, thus avoiding unnecessary tests and medications. Here we present such a case of a young boy who landed up with "Candida Overgrowth Syndrome" after long-term intake of antibiotics taken for treating acne.

INTRODUCTION

The body plays a host to multitude of microorganisms, and a proper balance among them is one of the keys to good health (Amy Myers, 2015). While bacteria are the commonest, but a small amount of yeasts called "*Candida albicans*" also inhabit in the body, particularly in the gastrointestinal tract, mouth, vagina and on the skin (Birgitta Evengard and Hanna Grans, 2007). The body's good bacteria and the immune system keep a check on these *Candida*. But if they overgrow, they are responsible for a variety of chronic illness (Candida and chronic fatigue syndrome, 2015). Overgrowth of these *Candida* may be due to excessive and long term use of antibiotics particularly for treating acne and sinusitis, intake of birth control pills and steroids, a dysfunctional immune or gastrointestinal system (Mehdi Taheri Sarvtin, 2014). The key symptoms include, bloating gas, diarrhea or constipation. Fatigue, headache, depression, irritability, inability to concentrate. Sugar cravings, increased sensitivities, muscle and joint aches recurrent skin rashes, skin and nail infections. Decreased libido, recurrent vaginal infections, prostrate and bladder infections and many more (Amy Myers, 2015; Birgitta Evengard and Hanna Grans, 2007; Candida and chronic fatigue syndrome, 2015; Mehdi Taheri Sarvtin, 2014).

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The blood investigations are usually normal in Candida overgrowth syndrome. Appropriate and timely diagnosis with clinical correlation is essential for the same. The Stool routine microscopy test is clinically relevant along with candida IgG, IgA and IgM detection (Textbook of natural medicine, 2012). Treatment includes a low sugar diet, probiotics along with antifungal medication if required. Also avoiding unnecessary antibiotics and steroid use can be helpful in treating Candida overgrowth syndrome.

CASE REPORT

A 26 year old male presented to the outpatient department of our hospital with the complaints of chronic fatigue, loss of energy, inability to concentrate, depression, bloating and gas, diarrhea or constipation, allergies, low immune function etc. Also he had a striking craving for foods rich in carbohydrates. He gave a past history of excessive use of antibiotics for treating acne, followed by typhoid and malaria. He also met with an accident for which he was on lots of laser treatment and antibiotics. Later he developed a lot of gastrointestinal symptoms and was diagnosed with Irritable bowel disease (IBD) for which again he was on medication. Subsequently he also developed skin infections i.e eczema and psoriasis and was on treatment. Ultimately he had vertigo felt, excessive fatigue and had an occasional fall (loss of consciousness).

Surprisingly all his repeated blood investigation reports were absolutely normal with Hb 14.3gm/dl, ESR 6mm/Hg, Random blood sugar 82mg/dl, SGOT37 U/l, SGPT 51.0 U/l, FT4 1.07 ng/dl, TSH 3.40mIU/ml, Vitamin B12 294pg/ml, except for Vitamin D3 which was low 8.46ng/dl for which he was supplemented orally. Out of curiosity, he happened to visit Microbiology department and with extensive study and clinical correlation, we tried to rule out “Candida overgrowth syndrome”. His routine stool, urine and sputum examination showed *Candida* microscopically which further confirmed the diagnosis. Meantime he started ayurvedic treatment, and as it was proved microbiologically that he had Candida overgrowth he was given antifungal treatment, along with a dietary shift from high carbohydrate to high protein diet. Also he was prescribed probiotics, immune boosters along with regular exercise and medication. There was a drastic reduction in his generalized and gastrointestinal symptoms and was satisfied with the treatment after a long time.

DISCUSSION

A lot of literature and few studies (Amy Myers, 2015; Birgitta Evengard and Hanna Grans, 2007; Candida and chronic fatigue syndrome, 2015; Mehdi Taheri Sarvtin, 2014; Kathlee Jade, 2014; Textbook of natural medicine, 2012) indicate that the overuse of broad spectrum antibiotics is by far the most frequent cause of Candida Overgrowth Syndrome. Along with the antibiotics, steroids, birth control pills also contribute. Factors like stress, weak end immune system, and high sugar diet also may favour the condition. Candida overgrowth results in release of toxins which destroy the digestive system, immunity and drain of energy and health and lead to a cascade of generalized, gastrointestinal and Central nervous system symptoms.

Conclusion

Candida overgrowth syndrome indeed is an upcoming clinical condition, which may be a player in number of health conditions. So one should never self treat, or under treat themselves and always consult a right doctor if one has repeated gastrointestinal and other generalized symptoms with blood investigations normal to rule out Candida Overgrowth Syndrome.

Eight Steps to greater health

- 1) Get the correct diagnosis.
- 2) Starve the Candida.
- 3) Take antifungal medications.
- 4) Heal the leaky gut with herbal teas, nutritional supplements etc.
- 5) Re-populate the gut with friendly bacteria –probiotics.
- 6) Boost the immune system.
- 7) Detoxify the liver by drinking lots of water. Herbs such as Ginger, lemon etc. encourage the flow of bile.
- 8) Aid the digestive process with digestive enzymes supplements, Yogurt etc.

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