



What can I do if my Baby has Oral Thrush?

What is oral thrush and what are the signs that your baby may have it? Oral thrush is a common fungal infection in the mouth. It can be easily and quickly treated if it doesn't clear up on its own.

- Look out for white spots or patches on your baby's cheeks, gums, and palate. These patches can look like milk spots, but if you rub them there will be a raw area underneath.
- Your baby may fuss when breastfeeding, or might even refuse your breast or bottle.
- Sometimes babies also get persistent nappy rash when they have oral thrush. It might look red or bright pink with small raised red spots and you might find standard nappy rash creams aren't effective in clearing the rash.
- If you are breastfeeding, you may also have thrush on your nipples, making them painful, red and cracked.

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For additional fact sheets see www.ihv.org.uk

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What treatment will my baby receive?

- If your baby has oral thrush which doesn't clear up within a few days they may need to be prescribed an anti-fungal treatment. Make an appointment with your GP or Health Visitor who can diagnose and treat you both – it's important that both baby and mum are treated at the same time to make sure you don't keep passing the infection back and forth, even if 1 of you does not have symptoms. You can also speak to your local pharmacist as some anti-fungal creams can be bought over the counter.
- Your GP or Health Visitor may prescribe an antifungal treatment called Nystatin oral suspension if your baby is under 4 months. Older babies are usually prescribed Miconazole gel.
- Nystatin comes with a dropper that you can use to apply the medicine on the affected areas after feeds.
- Miconazole gel is applied to the affected areas of your baby's mouth by using a clean finger. Try to avoid the back of your baby's mouth to reduce the risk of choking.
- A course of treatment usually takes 7 days and you should keep applying the treatment 2 days after symptoms of the infection have cleared up. If there is no improvement after a week of consistently applying the treatment, ask your GP for further advice.

What can I do to prevent oral thrush?

- Oral thrush will usually become less of a problem as your baby's immune system matures.
- Although there is no evidence that thrush can be prevented, it is advisable to take care when sterilising bottles, dummies and other feeding equipment.

- Wash your breasts after feeding in plain water, pat dry and apply prescribed treatments if you still have thrush.
- To prevent reinfection make sure you keep separate towels for you and your baby, wash your hands before and after feeding, and before and after changing your baby's nappy.

More information:

NHS Choices has useful info about Oral Thrush in Babies here:

bit.ly/1oM6CkM