

## **Jock itch and yeast infection: Is there a connection?** <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

If a guy has jock itch, can it be passed on to a woman in the form of a yeast infection during sexual intercourse? I had intercourse with a guy and he had jock itch. A few days later I got a vaginal yeast infection. Could there be a connection?

### **Answer**

Dear Reader,

Even though it seems as though there is a connection between the yeast infection you have and this guy's jock itch, the two are coincidental, since there is no definite causal relationship between the two. Jock itch is caused by organisms called dermatophytes, which include a group of fungi that normally infects the top layer of dead skin, nails, and hair. *Trichophyton rubrum*, one of the most common fungi producing jock itch, is unlike the fungus *Candida albicans*, which often causes vaginal fungal infections and can grow on skin, mucous membrane, and/or internal tissue. The lay term for fungal infections is yeast infections.

*Candida albicans* is normally present in the vagina, but causes a yeast infection when it multiplies sufficiently to produce symptoms. Reasons for this excessive growth are:

- Birth control use
- Weakened immune system
- Pregnancy
- Diabetes
- Skin maceration
- Antibiotic treatment
- Alteration in the normal vaginal flora as a result of bacterial vaginosis

Fungus grows well in dark, warm, moist environments. People are at risk of developing fungal (yeast) infections if they wear tight fitting clothes made of synthetic materials, sweat a lot during exercise, or remain in damp clothing.

Men can acquire Candidal infections in the groin, especially if two skin surfaces touch and

moisture collects there. Men are also likely to get a fungal infection from a woman partner if they have not been circumcised. If one partner has an oral form of yeast infection called "thrush," it can be transmitted during oral sex.

So another possibility is that maybe the guy did not have jock itch. He may have had a yeast infection and passed it on to you. Luckily, you can easily treat your yeast infection with over-the-counter topical creams and/or vaginal suppositories. If these do not work, a women's health care provider or your primary care physician can prescribe oral or other medications for you.

For more information about yeast infections, peruse the website of the [American Urology Association](#) [2].

Alice!

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