



## Children's Health

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# Thrush

### WHAT IS IT?

Our bodies house many different kinds of microbes. In small numbers, they pose no harm. One microbe, a fungus called *Candida albicans*, is common in the mouth, as well as in other parts of the body. If this fungus begins to reproduce uncontrollably in the mouth, it will produce an infection known as oral thrush.

Thrush often occurs in newborn babies. Babies are susceptible because their immune systems are not yet mature. They may be exposed to *Candida albicans* in the birth canal, or it can be spread from one infant to another through the common use of toys, rubber nipples or poorly sterilized bottles. It can also occur when the immune system has been weakened by prolonged use of antibiotics or corticosteroids.



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#### **SYMPTOMS OF THRUSH**

*a heavy, whitish coating on the tongue*

*white, creamy patches in the mouth*

*mouth soreness*

*red, inflamed skin under the white patches in the mouth*

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### **TREATMENT**

If you suspect thrush in your baby, see your child's doctor.

An anti-fungal medicine will be prescribed.

The infection is easily treated  
and will usually clear up within a week or so.