

Vaginal Infections

Frequent vaginal infections are a common problem for women. Most vaginal infections are caused by an “imbalance” in the normal bacterial and yeast environment of the vagina. In the normal vagina, the yeast and bacteria grow in competition with each other, preventing “overgrowth” or infection. An imbalance may be precipitated by a recent event such as antibiotic use or heavy menstrual bleeding. Hormonal changes may increase a woman’s susceptibility to vaginal infections. Examples of hormonal changes are: the monthly changes of the menstrual cycle, pregnancy, pre-menopause, menopause, oral contraceptives, or breastfeeding. Some medications such as antihistamines may precipitate vaginal infections.

Hormonal changes are a natural part of a woman’s life, therefore efforts to control vaginal infections focus on restoring a “good” balance to vaginal environment. We recommend that women:

- Avoid douching
- Avoid harsh perfumed or deodorant soaps
- Avoid fabric softener or dryer sheets
- Wear cotton underwear

Boric acid is an over-the-counter eyewash powder. It is gentle enough to use in the eyes and vagina. The acid helps to restore the normal acidic vaginal environment. By using boric acid in the vagina, a woman begins to restore the balance of growth of the yeast and bacteria in the vagina. The boric acid is a powder and frequently is less messy than creams. It is safe for use in pregnancy.

Boric Acid Capsules:

Boric Acid Powder- available without a prescription and can be found at Rite Aid, Broadway Apothecary, Northwest Pharmaceutical Compounding, or online.

Large Gelatin Capsules “00”- available without a prescription (bag of 100) about 600 mg size- a pharmacist can help you identify the correct size. (Some pharmacists will make this for you for a small charge such as Northwest Compounding.)

- Fill the gelatin capsules with boric acid.
- Place a Boric Acid capsule in the vagina twice daily.

Treatment

If you have the beginnings of a vaginal infection such as itching, discharge, or odor, it is safe to use the Boric Acid to prevent a full infection. Use one capsule in the vagina twice daily for one week. If the treatment fails, or if you have pain or fever, please make an appointment to see your provider.

Prevention

Many women will suffer from recurring vaginal infections. To prevent an infection, boric acid can be used to reestablish the normal environment. It can be used in the following ways: Begin the last 2 days of the menstrual cycle and continue for 5-7 days. Use twice daily while taking antibiotics to avoid infection.