

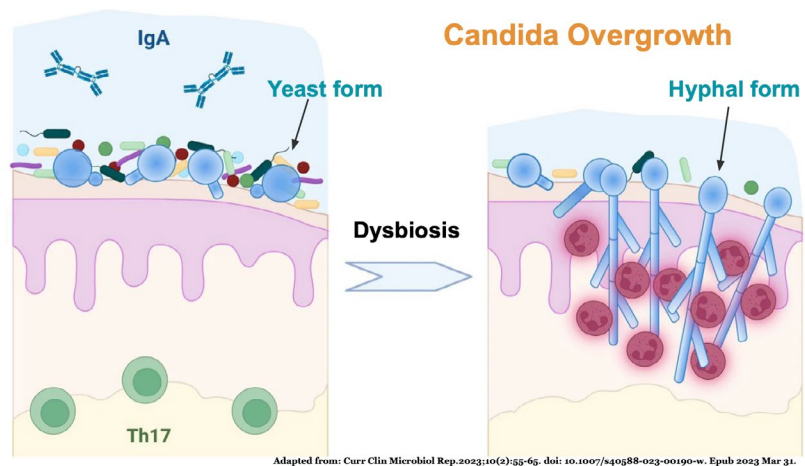
The Candida Diet

What is Candida?

Candida is a type of yeast normally present in the mouth, gut, and skin of healthy individuals.^{1, 2} A balanced microbiome prevents Candida from becoming problematic. However, Candida can also function as an opportunistic organism, meaning it can overgrow and become problematic under certain conditions. In such conditions, Candida begins to grow arm-like structures called hyphae, enabling it to penetrate tissues, activate the immune system, and trigger inflammation.

What factors cause candida to become opportunistic and overgrow? ^{3, 4, 5, 6}

- Antibiotics
- Alcohol
- Processed food
- Chronic stress
- Acid-lowering medication
- Birth control
- Steroid medication use



Inflammation triggered by candida can result in a wide range of symptoms in both the gut and throughout the rest of the body.

Common symptoms of candida include: ^{7, 8, 9, 10}

- Abdominal pain
- Gas, bloating
- Nausea
- Indigestion
- Diarrhea, constipation
- Anxiety, depression
- Fatigue
- Brain fog
- Oral thrush
- Vaginal yeast infections
- Carbohydrate cravings (including for alcohol)

Thankfully, we have research and clinical experience demonstrating a candida diet can significantly improve or resolve symptoms associated with candida.¹¹

What is the Candida Diet?

Carbohydrate Quality

The Candida diet primarily emphasizes the elimination of processed carbohydrates and the consumption of whole foods such as meats, fruits, and vegetables. Some Candida diets advocate for a low-carbohydrate approach. While this can help manage Candida, it may be too restrictive and suboptimal for some. This is because some individuals may feel worse on a low-carbohydrate diet, experiencing symptoms like fatigue, insomnia, cramping, and headaches. This Candida diet intentionally includes high-quality carbohydrates in moderation, as not all carbohydrates negatively impact gut health and fungal balance, as has been demonstrated in one clinical trial.¹¹

High quality carbohydrates

- Contain fiber and polyphenols
- Feed good bacteria, which fights candida

Low quality carbohydrates

- Lack fiber and polyphenols
- Quickly turn to sugar, which feeds candida

What to Expect

We have broken up the handout into 3 categories:

- Foods that are **safe**
- Foods to eat in **moderation**
- Foods to **avoid**

For the first three weeks, we recommend following the diet more diligently, focusing mainly on foods in the safe category, while allowing some items from the moderation category. If this diet is right for you, you should see symptom improvement within 1-3 weeks.

If your symptoms improve, you can start incorporating more foods from the moderation section to further expand your diet. Be sure to listen to your body throughout this process.

Remember, you don't need to be perfect with this diet! Achieving 100% compliance is challenging, can be stressful, and usually isn't necessary to feel better. **About 80% compliance is typically sufficient and allows for some flexibility.**

Candida Diet Food List

| Food Groups | Safe | Moderation | Avoid |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Vegetables & Legumes | Non-starchy: Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Asparagus, Cucumbers, Kale, Spinach, Cabbage, Carrots | Starchy: Cooked whole potatoes, Sweet potatoes, Whole corn, Beets, Squash Legumes: Green Beans, Green Peas, Lentils, Edamame, Peanuts, Chickpeas, Beans | Processed: Potatoes (chips, fried), Corn products (chips, tortillas, flour) |
| Fruits | Avocado | Cranberries, Raspberries, Blackberries, Strawberries, Blueberries, Grapefruit, Watermelon, Apples, Pears, Peaches, Oranges, Cantaloupe | Fruit juice, Dried fruit, Pineapple, Bananas, Grapes, Mangos |
| Fermented Foods | X | Kimchi, Sauerkraut, Kefir (unsweetened) | Kombucha |
| Whole Grains & Starches | X | Whole grains: Brown rice (short or sprouted grain), Quinoa, Rolled oats (not instant) Breads: Sprouted whole grain (Ezekiel) | Refined: White bread, White rice, Sweet cereals, Baked goods Flours: All-purpose, Wheat, Tapioca, Corn, Cassava, Arrowroot, Maltodextrin |
| Protein | Eggs, Chicken, Turkey, Beef, Lamb, Pork Fatty Fish: Salmon, Anchovies, Mackerel, Sardines, Tuna Protein Powders: Whey, Pea, Collagen, Hemp | X | Processed: Bacon, Sausage, Hotdogs, Bologna, Beef jerky, Deli meats |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Dairy & Alternatives | Unsweetened yogurt Ghee, Butter | Yellow cheese (gouda, mozzarella, provolone, cheddar) | Cow's milk, Goat's milk, Moldy cheese (Brie, Blue) Sweetened yogurt, Sweetened non-dairy milk |
| Nuts & Seeds | Almonds, Chia seeds, Flax seeds, Pecans, Pumpkin Seeds, Sunflower seeds, Sesame seeds | Cashews, Peanuts, Pistachios, Walnuts, Brazil nuts | X |
| Beverages | Caffeine (Coffee or Tea), Herbal tea, Broth | X | Soda, Fruit juice, Energy drinks, Sweetened drinks, Alcohol |
| Fats & Oils | Anti-Candida: Olive oil, Safflower oil, Sesame oil, MCT, Coconut | X | X |
| Herbs & Spices | All are allowed Anti-Candida: Oregano, Ginger, Cinnamon, Turmeric, Black pepper, Cumin, Bay leaf | X | X |
| Condiments | X | Vinegar, Mayonnaise, Condiments without added sugar (Ketchup, Barbeque Sauce), Coconut Aminos | Condiments with added sugar (barbeque sauce, ketchup, etc) |
| Sweeteners | Stevia, Monk fruit, Erythritol | X | Added sugar, molasses, maple syrup, honey, date syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, maltose, cane sugar |

Controversial Foods

Nuts and seeds

Some suggest completely avoiding nuts and seeds due to the presence of mold, but there are no studies indicating this increases Candida. To err on the side of caution, we recommend focusing on low-mold nuts and seeds, while personalizing your intake of higher-mold varieties.

Caffeine

Most Candida diets recommend avoiding caffeine, claiming it raises blood sugar and fuels Candida growth. However, no studies have shown that caffeine worsens Candida. In fact, some cell studies suggest that caffeine might inhibit Candida growth.^{12, 13} Our interpretation and experience suggests caffeine is okay to consume.

Yeast-containing foods (fermented food, vinegars)

Some suggest avoiding foods that contain yeast, as they may trigger an immune response in individuals dealing with Candida. While there haven't been any studies directly assessing this theory, some people do report anecdotally their symptoms worsen from consuming yeast-containing foods. Our interpretation is it's okay to experiment with yeast-containing foods.

Candida-Fighting Supplements

The supplements listed below can help combat Candida.^{14, 15, 16, 17, 18} Using probiotics with the Candida diet may promote a healthier gut microbiome and improve symptoms. If symptoms persist, consider adding antimicrobials.

Other supportive candida-fighting supplements include Biota-boost and MCT Oil Powder.

Biota-boost is a prebiotic supplement that helps encourage the growth of healthy bacteria. When used in moderate doses, it tends not to flare digestion symptoms.

MCT Oil Powder can be added to your diet as a healthy fat, and has been shown in 1 clinical trial to reduce candida.¹⁶

Do not make any changes or use any supplements until you speak with your doctor.

Probiotics

- **Lacto/bifido blend:** 2 capsules per day, with or without food
- **Saccharomyces boulardii:** 2 capsules per day, with or without food
- **Soil-based:** 2 capsules per day, with or without food.

Herbal Antimicrobials

- **Biota clear 1a:** 4 capsules twice per day, best with food.
- **Biota-Clear 2a :** 3 capsules, twice per day, best with food.

Nutritional Supports

- **MCT Oil Powder:** 1-2 scoops per day
- **Biota-boost:** 2-3 capsules 1-2x per day.

Elemental Diet

An elemental diet includes maltodextrin, a carbohydrate usually avoided in candida diets. However, maltodextrin in an elemental diet is quickly absorbed in the upper small intestine, preventing it from feeding candida in the gut.

Recent studies have shown that a short-term elemental diet can significantly reduce candida levels in the stool.^{19, 20} This diet is specially formulated to provide all necessary nutrients in an easily digestible form, which allows your digestive system to rest and heal.

Always consult your healthcare provider before starting an elemental diet to ensure it is appropriate for your individual health needs.