



Mark A. Stengler, NMD ■ La Jolla Whole Health Clinic

## FUNGUS: OVERLOOKED AND UNDETECTED

### Could you be infected?

**L**ilia had uncontrolled asthma and wheezing. She had suffered from sinus infections and was repeatedly treated with antibiotics and anti-inflammatory steroids. Natural remedies cleared up her sinus infection but not her wheezing. Concerned, I sent her to a lung specialist and asked for a fungal infection test. Antibiotics are known to destroy the body's healthful bacteria, which usually keep *fungi* in check. Sure enough, the test came back positive. Treatment with an antifungal protocol rapidly improved her respiratory problems.

#### WHAT IS FUNGUS?

A fungus is a spore-producing, plantlike organism. Yeast, mold, mildew and mushrooms all are fungi. More than 100,000 species of fungus have been documented, and a few hundred can be detrimental to human health.

Fungal infections are the root cause of many illnesses—from sinusitis to kidney disease. And they are an area of medicine that is largely ignored by conventional physicians. *How to protect yourself...*

#### FUNGUS IS EVERYWHERE

Fungi harm us by triggering allergic reactions...causing either localized or systemic infections... and exposing us to poisonous waste products called *mycotoxins*, which have been shown to depress immune function (and have been linked to certain types of

cancers) and promote inflammation (associated with heart disease).

Fungi invade through our lungs, skin and digestive tract. Food, especially grains and peanuts, is rampant with fungi. Once inside our bodies, fungi can survive indefinitely. Fungal infections have been documented in every body part except teeth.

#### HOW FUNGI CAN AFFECT HEALTH

Lifelong exposure to fungi leaves the body vulnerable to disease. There's growing evidence based on research in the US (at the Mayo Clinic) and around the world linking fungi to many ailments, including...

- Eczema, psoriasis and other skin conditions
- Upper-respiratory tract symptoms
- Chronic sinusitis
- Kidney and bladder diseases
- Parkinson's disease
- Dementia and Alzheimer's disease
- Cancer of the liver
- Tumors of the kidneys, urinary tract and colon
- Endocarditis (inflammation of the heart lining and valves)
- Atherosclerosis
- Diabetes and hypoglycemia
- Hormone imbalance
- Weight gain
- Kidney stones

#### HOW TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE A FUNGAL INFECTION

Blood tests that detect fungal infections have not yet been developed, although sputum culture tests (for lungs) and stool tests (for the digestive system) can detect fungus.

For those with the conditions listed above who get sick often or whose conditions do not improve with treatment, the best way to determine if your health is being affected by fungi is to go on an antifungal diet. This type of eating kills off the fungi inside your body by starving them of the nutrients that they need.

Going on an antifungal diet before you have a disease such as Alzheimer's can reduce your risk for the disease. If fungus is causing a disease (such as liver cancer) to thrive, getting rid of the fungus may slow the progression of the illness. And if your chronic condition is caused by fungus, you may be able to relieve some of your symptoms.

#### THE ANTIFUNGAL DIET

One of the best sources of information on fungus is Doug Kaufmann, who has specialized in these infections for 30 years, after suffering from one himself. He teamed up with David Hollander, MD, to create *Know the Cause*, a Web site ([www.knowthecause.com](http://www.knowthecause.com)) and syndicated television show on the subject. They have created a

Mark A. Stengler, NMD, is a naturopathic medical doctor and leading authority on the practice of alternative and integrated medicine. He is editor of Bottom Line's *Natural Healing* newsletter, author of *The Natural Physician's Healing Therapies* (Bottom Line Books), director of the La Jolla Whole Health Clinic in La Jolla, California and adjunct clinical professor at the National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, Oregon. To learn more about his work, visit [www.drstengler.com](http://www.drstengler.com) and [www.lajollawholehealth.com](http://www.lajollawholehealth.com).

Copyright © 2009 by Boardroom Inc., 281 Tresser Blvd., Stamford, Connecticut 06901-3229. [www.BottomLineSecrets.com](http://www.BottomLineSecrets.com)

multiphase antifungal diet that is high in protein and low in carbohydrates.

Fungi thrive on sugar and high-glycemic carbohydrates (which the body easily converts to sugar). The antifungal diet eliminates these foods and increases those that inhibit the growth of fungus. For the first phase of the antifungal diet...

**Avoid...**

- Grains, including rice, corn and wheat

- All sugars
- Pistachios and peanuts
- Potatoes and mushrooms
- Processed foods.

**Consume...**

- Eggs
- Beef from cattle that has been grass-fed, which reduces the likelihood of fungus contamination
  - Fish and chicken (all types)
  - Nuts, other than pistachios and peanuts

- Vegetables, including carrots, broccoli, cabbage, onions

- Green apples (which have less naturally occurring sugar than other apples), berries, grapefruit, lemon, lime, avocados, flaxseeds

- Plain yogurt, real butter
- Oregano
- Coconut oil, olive oil, grapeseed oil, flaxseed oil.

If your health improves after two to four weeks on this diet, there's a good chance that you have a fungal infection. Kaufmann then recommends a less restricted diet, gradually reintroducing some foods, including some grains.

**Caution:** Carbohydrates are an important energy source for young children and women who are pregnant or breast-feeding. They should *not* follow this diet unless monitored by a physician. People with advanced kidney disease (who should not

consume a lot of protein) should avoid this diet.

**OTHER WAYS TO REDUCE FUNGUS**

**Antifungal remedies and medications.** If the antifungal diet does not improve your condition or if you want a more aggressive approach, try one or more natural remedies (in combination with the diet), sold separately as olive-leaf extract, grapefruit-seed extract, oregano (fresh, dried or oil), garlic, herbal pau d'arco tea, zinc, citrus bioflavonoids and d-limonene (oil extracted from citrus rind). Or look for a combination formula, such as CandiGONE by Renew Life (800-830-1800, [www.renewlife.com](http://www.renewlife.com)). Take as directed on the label for one month.

If your symptoms do not improve, speak to a physician about a prescription antifungal medication, such as *nystatin* (Mycostatin) or *fluconazole* (Diflucan). ■ ■