

## PARENT ALERT

Contagious disease exposure in room \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

### THRUSH (Candidiasis)

**WHAT IS IT?** A yeast infection predominately produced by *Candida albicans*, causing mouth infections in young infants.

#### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

- White patches on the inside of cheeks and on gums and the tongue
- Usually causes no other signs or symptoms

#### HOW CAN YOU CATCH IT?

- *C. albicans* is present in the intestinal tract and mucous membranes of healthy people.
- A warm environment (e.g., mouth) fosters growth and spread.
- Person-to-person transmission (although very rare) may occur from a woman to her baby when the mother has a vaginal yeast infection and from breastfeeding babies to their mothers when babies with thrush infect mothers' nipples.

#### WHEN CAN YOU CATCH IT?

- Incubation period: Unknown.
- Contagious period: The yeast that causes thrush is widespread in the environment, normally lives on the skin, and is found in the mouth and stool. Mild infection of the lining of the mouth is common in healthy infants. Thrush can occur during or after antibiotic use. Repetitive or severe thrush could signal immune problems.

**WHAT ARE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?** Usually none.

#### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- Wash hands carefully.
- See a medical professional. Treatment of individuals who have an infection so the quantity of fungus in any area is reduced to levels the body can control.
- Wash and sanitize toys, bottles, and pacifier nipples after they have been mouthed.
- Do not allow sharing of mouthed objects between children without first washing and sanitizing them
- Change bed sheets daily and launder with detergent.

#### WHAT WILL THE STAFF DO?

- Wash and sanitize toys, bottles, and pacifier nipples after they have been mouthed.
- Do not allow sharing of mouthed objects between children without first washing and sanitizing them
- Practice careful handwashing.
- Monitor other children for thrush.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE AFFECTED CHILD?** Use the medicine exactly as prescribed. Do not stop when lesions are cleared. Finish the dosage.

**EXCLUDE FROM GROUP SETTING?**

No.

**WHEN CAN THE CHILD RETURN TO CLASS?** The child does not need to be excluded, unless they have a fever, or does not feel well enough to participate. *If you have any questions, please contact your childcare center and healthcare provider.*

*Adapted from Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide Guide. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2022*