

Antifungals (Miconazole, Clotrimazole)

Ant-tie-fun-guy

Antifungal medications administered as vaginal suppositories are indicated for vaginitis caused by a fungal infection. Patients with *Candida albicans* may be prescribed miconazole (Monistat), clotrimazole (Gyne-Lotrimin) or tioconazole (Vagistat). Vaginitis caused by *Trichomonas vaginalis* may be treated with metronidazole (Flagyl) or tinidazole (Tindamax). Warn the patient that metronidazole may cause a metallic taste and to avoid alcohol consumption or soaps/perfumes containing alcohol when prescribed metronidazole to avoid a disulfiram reaction.

Antibiotics

ABX-guy

Bacterial causes of vaginitis may be treated with sulfonamides or penicillins. The choice of medication and duration of treatment depends on the specific organism. However, use of antibiotics such as penicillins, tetracycline, and cephalosporin may alter vaginal pH and increase the patient's susceptibility of developing *Candida albicans* infection.

Estrogen Hormones

Easter-egg Harmonica

Vaginitis caused by postmenopausal atrophy may be treated with estrogen hormones to help restore normal levels of vaginal secretions. Estrogen hormones may be administered topically or orally.

Abstinence

Purity-ring

To prevent infecting others, advise the patient to abstain from sexual activity until the infection is resolved with a completed full course of medication. If the patient chooses to engage in sexual intercourse, advise the patient to use a condom.

Considerations

Good Hygiene

Clean High-jeans

Good hygiene is critical in preventing vaginitis. Instruct the patient to keep the perineum clean and dry to prevent development of infection. Recommending the use of cotton underwear helps wick away moisture that may otherwise encourage vaginal organism growth. Warn the patient that douching should be avoided since it has been linked with pelvic inflammatory disease, sexually transmitted infections, and ectopic pregnancy.

Recurrent Vaginitis

Recurrent-clock with Vagina-violets-on-fire

Teach the patient good hygiene techniques to prevent the recurrence of vaginitis. However, if the patient experiences multiple infections of *Candida albicans*, refer them to get tested for HIV since recurrent infection is a common symptom of HIV. Instruct the patient to take the full course of prescribed medication to decrease the chance of relapse.