



Fungal meningitis

Fungal meningitis may be caused by several types of fungus, for example:

[Candida albicans](#)

This is the fungus which causes thrush.

In very rare cases it can cause a dangerous form of meningitis, especially in premature babies with very low birth weight.

[Cryptococcus neoformans](#)

This fungus causes most cases of fungal meningitis.

Cryptococcal meningitis is caused by a yeast or fungus commonly found in the environment, including the soil, everywhere in the world.

Generally, only people with deficiencies of the immune system including inherited immune conditions, HIV, cancer or, more rarely, diabetes develop serious cryptococcal infection, such as meningitis. Symptoms may include headache, fever, nausea, vomiting, stiff neck, dislike of bright lights, changes in mental state and hallucinations. Symptoms do not come on suddenly as with acute bacterial meningitis but appear gradually.

Treatment is with antifungal medication, for instance or amphotericin B, flucytosine and fluconazole. Many patients will need "maintenance therapy" - which means they will have to continue taking medication indefinitely.

[Histoplasma](#)

This fungus is common and harmless in people with functioning immune systems, but can cause meningitis and other invasive diseases in immuno-deficient patients.

Where can I go for further information and support?

Freephone helpline UK 080 88 00 33 44 Ireland 1800 41 33 444

email helpline@meningitis.org

Visit our website www.meningitis.org