



Oral thrush (oropharyngeal candidiasis) is a fungal infection of the oropharynx caused by an overgrowth of the yeast organism *Candida* species, most commonly *Candida albicans*.

Candida albicans is a normal part of the microbiome, but in certain populations, overgrowth may occur opportunistically.

PRESENTATION

- **White plaques on the buccal mucosa, palate, tongue, or oropharynx**
 - Infants < 6 months, most commonly
 - May be asymptomatic
 - Refusal to swallow or eat due to pain.
 - Older children may complain of a "cottony" feeling in their mouth or loss of taste.



RISK FACTORS

- Immunodeficiency: primary vs. secondary (medications/chemotherapy)
- Recent antibiotic use
- Inhaled glucocorticoid use
- Radiation therapy
- Frequent/extensive pacifier use

DIAGNOSIS

- Clinical diagnosis in most cases
- Differential diagnosis:
 - Milk tongue = white plaques limited to the tongue & wiping plaque with warm cloth will remove this
 - In cases of treatment failure may rarely need to confirm diagnosis with Gram stain or potassium hydroxide (KOH) preparation.
 - Diagnosis made based on presence of budding yeasts with or without hyphae.

MANAGEMENT

