

Harbinger's column

Vaginitis: common ill

Vaginitis is almost a sure thing at least once in every woman's life.

However, (if it's any consolation), while it is the most common disease of the female genitourinary system, it is not dangerous, and in most cases responds instantly to treatment.

Vaginitis is not limited to women; men can carry the disease without knowing it, and may either re-infect a partner already receiving treatment or transmit the disease to other partners.

As well, almost every case of vaginitis can be cured effectively if a correct diagnosis is made and adequate treatment given.

Accept treatment from a doctor who will talk to you honestly about the problem, and make sure a smear is taken so the specific type of organism present is known and therefore the proper treatment started. All this takes is a quick look under the microscope; it is in your interest to demand it.

Vaginitis can be caused by an invasion of bacteria, a fungus or even a parasite. These agents can be present in the vagina without creating any problem, but the disease will usually ensue if the natural balance of things changes significantly.

Certain medications (antibiotics for instance), too frequent douching, use of feminine deodorant sprays, and last but certainly not least, the birth control pill, all change the homeostasis of the vagina. They tend to kill off the natural flora of the vagina and leave it susceptible to invasion from other organisms.

The most commonly known types of vaginitis are trichomonas, Monilia, and non-specific vaginitis.

Trichomonas can be identified by the occurrence of a fierce itch, a vaginal discharge that ranges from thin and milky grey to thick and yellow or green, and has a strong offensive odor. Often a burning feeling during urination and pain during sexual intercourse is noticed.

It is possible the germ may be present in the vagina without showing any symptoms, but most often it will multiply and cause excessive discharge. Men may have a slight discharge from the urethra and the tip of the penis may be slightly sore or itchy.

Treatment of trichomonas should be fairly complex to ensure complete remission of the disease. Both partners must be treated at the

same time to stop the possibility of re-infection.

The immediate treatment for women is either the painting of the vaginal area with trichomonacide, or the insertion of medicated powder or cream into the vagina. Then antibiotics (usually Flagyl) are taken either as a vaginal suppository or as oral tablets.

This prescription usually lasts for 10 days, and may be complemented by the woman's douching with an acidic solution; the male partner can be easily treated with a 10 day course of oral flagyl tablets.

Monilia, better known as "yeast infection", is found mostly in women who are sugar diabetic, on antibiotics or birth control pills, or pregnant. Males can be irritated by the disease, and a redness or irritation is found after contact, but they are not infected by it.

Newborn babies can also pick up monilia during delivery and develop white patches in the mouth (thrush) which respond early to treatment. The symptoms are itchy, sometimes pain on urination, and a discharge that is whitish, flaky, thick and almost curdy.

Treatment for monilia consists of an antifungal antibiotic called nystatin, in the form of suppositories inserted once or twice daily for a period of three to six weeks. Males should avoid intercourse with a female who has monilia, or should use a condom.

The last group, non-specific vaginitis, tends to be caused in 70 per cent of the cases by homophilus vaginalis. Both men and women can get it, as it can be passed back and forth between partners.

Symptoms are a frothy, odorous discharge and can be diagnosed by microscopic examination.



York president H. Ian Macdonald shakes hands with professor Chao Yung-hsin, one of the first Chinese academics to visit Canada under the cultural exchange programme between Canada and the People's Republic of China.

Looking on are (left to right) professor Hsiang Chin-chiang, visiting York with Chau; their inter-

preter; dean of arts Sid Eisen; and the coordinator of York's East Asian Studies programme, Daniel Tretiac.

Hsiang, professor of Chinese literature at Peking Normal University, will lecture on the life and works of Hao Jan at 9:30 this morning in S872 Ross.

Artists get grants for Women's Year

The Ontario Arts Council will make funds available to assist "professional creative artists and groups with projects specifically designed for International Women's Year.

Awards up to \$1,000 for in-

dividuals and up to \$3,000 for groups will be made, with priority given to original creation, in choreography, playwriting, composition, visual art, film and literature. The arts council will also make awards up to \$2,000 for administrative costs for non-profit organizations co-

ordinating cultural programmes for International Women's Year.

Individuals and groups seeking assistance for projects taking place before August, 1975 must submit their proposals in writing to the Arts Council no later than March 28. Requests for projects to be undertaken after August 1975, must be submitted by June 1.

Write to: International Women's Year, Ontario Arts Council, 151 Bloor St. W., Fifth floor.

U. N. challenge to our universities

Tonight at 8 p.m., in the auditorium of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Dr. Roger Guadry, rector of the University of Montreal and chairman of the U.N. University Council, will speak on The United Nations University: A Challenge to Canadian Univer-

sities. OISE is at 252 Bloor West, and admission to the lecture is free.

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