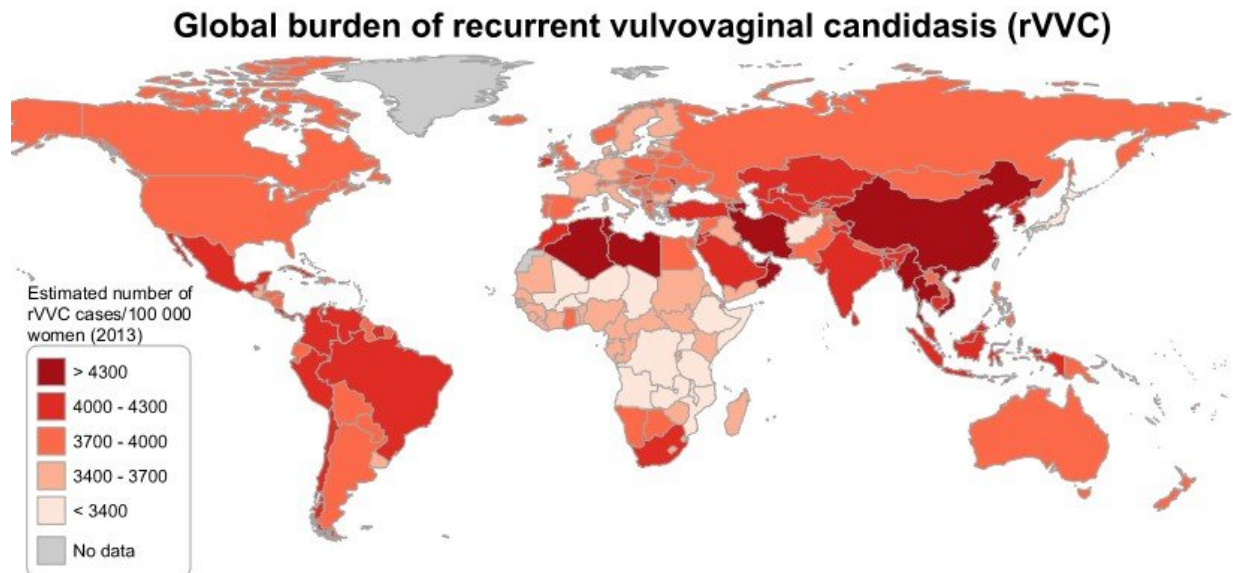


New figures show 138 million women suffer from recurrent thrush

August 3 2018



Credit: *Lancet Infectious Diseases*

Around 138 million women are affected by a distressing but treatable fungal infection world-wide, according to a research review by University of Manchester scientists.

And the incidence of recurrent [thrush](#), warns lead researcher Dr. Riina Rautemaa-Richardson, is set to rise to an estimated 158 million people by 2030.

The team from The University of Manchester—one of the leading centres in the world for fungal infection research—are publishing their findings in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* today.

Vulvovaginal candidiasis infection—caused by the overgrowth of the fungus *Candida*—causes itching, irritation, discharge, soreness and damage to the skin. For many women it is a taboo subject.

Previous research has shown that 75 percent of women develop thrush at least once in their lifetime and over 6 percent of women suffer from recurrent episodes.

Also from studies reviewed by the research team, thrush is a risk associated with menopausal women aged 55 and over, and women taking hormone replacement therapy and antibiotics.

Chinese, Indian and American women are the world's most numerous sufferers of thrush at 29.1 million and 23.6 million and 9 million respectively, they find.

Ghana, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, are the countries where the condition is the least prevalent from the data they harvested.

And a significant 1.2 million women in the UK suffer from the condition.

Dr. Rautemaa-Richardson said: "Recurrent vulvovaginal thrush is common, debilitating and complex.

"Myths, unnecessary worry and stigma are associated with it as medical professionals struggle to understand it.

"Though thrush is treatable, it often reoccurs and there are often

additional causes for the symptoms which all need to be addressed. Antifungal treatment is often only part of the solution.

"Thrush is often thought of as an embarrassing problem woman should accept, rather than a medical problem which needs to be dealt with.

"But for millions of women, it can have a massive impact on quality of life."

She added: "For many, thrush is treatable, and patients are able to regain their quality of life. But much work needs to be done to educate both healthcare professionals and patients about the best way to do that.

"We hope this research will give more [women](#) the confidence talk more openly about a problem which is distressing and painful."

The paper, "Global burden of recurrent vulvovaginal candidiasis: a systematic review," is published in *Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

More information: David W Denning et al. Global burden of recurrent vulvovaginal candidiasis: a systematic review, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/S1473-3099\(18\)30103-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(18)30103-8)

Provided by University of Manchester

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