

AETIOLOGICAL PATTERN OF VULVOVAGINAL CANDIDIASIS IN MALTESE PATIENTS.

N.Debattista, C.Barbara,P.Cuschieri,
F.Todaro Luck*.

Pathology epartment, Microbiology
Laboratory, St. Luke's Hospital,
Malta.

*Istituto di Microbiologia, Facolta' di
Medicina e Chirurgia, Universita' di
Messina, Italy.

Vaginitis is one of the most common problems in clinical medicine. The yeast-like *Candida* is the commonest organism causing vaginal infections in Europe, and the second most frequent in the United States. Recently a sharp increase in the incidence of these infections in the Western World and the emergence of non-*albicans* species have been reported, frequently associated with recurrence, probably due to resistance to the commonly used antifungal agents.

The aim of this study is to assess the incidence of mycotic vulvovaginitis and to detect the emergence of non-*albicans* species and resistant strains in symptomatic women. The difference in species could have clinical and therapeutic implications.

During a one year period high vaginal swabs from women suffering from vulvovaginitis were submitted to the Microbiology Laboratory of St.Luke's Hospital . The yeast isolates were identified to species level. Antifungal susceptibility testing was also performed. The most commune species isolated was *C. albicans* followed by *C.glabrata*. Other species, at a lower incidence, were *C. parapsilosis*,and *C. tropicalis*. The pattern of incidence of *Candida* species as an aetiological agent was in agreement with European and American studies. Further studies on recurrent vulvovaginal candidiasis will be carried out.