Objective
A solution based on oil of Thymus vulgaris (antibacterial and antifungal activity) and extract of Calendula officinalis (soothing action) was incorporated in a medicated pad (SCT) from which it is gradually released with body heat. SCT has optimal properties for use in situations at risk of infection, with low risk of sensitisation. Moreover, SCT does not alter the natural acidity of the vaginal mucosa due to the presence of lactic acid and ketoglutaric acid.

Aim of the study was to evaluate the effect of this new medicated pad compared with traditional pads in women with a tendency to develop recurrent vulvovaginal candidiasis (RVC).

Methods
Controlled, cross-over study in women during the menstrual period with RVC defined as Candida vulvovaginitis characterised by 4 or more episodes in a year, who were given SCT (Saugella Cotton Touch Day and Night, Rottapharm-Madaus) followed by non-medicated standard pads (Presteril) and vice versa, in a randomised sequence, with 3 consecutive cycles per pad type. Clinical assessments were undertaken at baseline and every 3 cycles. Wilcoxon test for paired data and the $\chi^2$ test were used for statistical analysis.

Results
The study enrolled 37 women, mean age of 30.9 years. Absorption, perception of smell, sense of being dry, softness, breathability and comfort were significantly better with SCT compared with C. No adverse reactions were reported.

Conclusions
The special innovative technology, incorporating natural active substances useful for prevention in pads made of modern materials, has showed the potential for the use of SCT. The presence of extract of Thymus vulgaris, especially its active substances thymol and carvacrol, guarantees protection from bacterial and fungal infections of the genital region, and its slow release facilitated by body heat makes the effect uniform throughout the entire period of pad application.