

MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

WHAT IS IT?

A fairly common skin disease caused by a virus that gives you distinctive small bumps.

The infection is benign (harmless) and will eventually go away on its own.

In the past it was mainly children who got this infection, but now it is often seen in sexually active adults.

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HOW DO YOU GET IT?

Usually by skin-to-skin contact with someone who has the virus.

It may also be spread by sharing things like towels, clothing, or razors. Swimming pools can also be a source.

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HOW LONG BEFORE IT SHOWS UP?

Usually two-three months after exposure.

It may show up as soon as one week or as late as six months after exposure.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Small flesh colored bumps that are filled with a white, waxy substance.

They may itch, but usually don't.

You often find them on the inner thighs, lower abdomen, or on the genitals.

They may appear on the shoulders, arms, legs, or face, especially in children or athletes.

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TESTING/DIAGNOSIS

The clinician at Health Quarters can diagnose molluscum by looking at the bumps.

The treatment itself helps to confirm the diagnosis because the bumps react in a specific way.

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HOW LONG CAN IT LAST?

Without treatment, each bump can last 2-3 months. New ones can appear and it can take 2-3 years before the last bump goes away.

TREATMENT

The bumps will go away on their own, but it can take years and you can pass them on to others while they are there.

At Health Quarters we can treat the bumps with TCA, an acid, or with cryotherapy (freezing). The treatment causes only mild discomfort.

You may need to have several treatments done, once a week.

You can also be given a prescription for a cream that can be helpful. It is very expensive to buy without insurance.

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WHAT DO I NEED TO DO AFTER TREATMENT?

After TCA or cryotherapy, you do not need to do anything different with the area. Wash the sites as you usually would when you bathe.

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WILL THEY COME BACK AFTER TREATMENT?

Usually not.

Like many viral infections, you often develop immunity and will not catch it again. However, sometimes they do recur.

HOW DO I REDUCE MY RISK?

Avoid skin-to-skin contact with someone that has molluscum.

Condoms or other barriers help to prevent contact.

Have sex only with one uninfected partner.

Do not share razors or other objects that may come in contact with your genitals.

If you have molluscum, be careful not to spread it to other parts of your body. Wash your hands after touching the bumps. Do not shave over or close to the bumps.

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WILL THIS AFFECT MY HEALTH?

No, this is a harmless skin infection that will go away.

Sometimes the bumps can leave a small indent in the skin.

HEALTH QUARTERS SERVICES

- Gynecology exams
- Birth control
- Free condoms
- Plan B-Emergency contraception
- Male and Female STD exams
- Pregnancy Testing & Counseling
- Rapid HIV testing & Counseling
- Breast & Cervical cancer screening



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ABOUT

MOLLUSCUM