



Molluscum Contagiosum

What Does Molluscum Look Like?

Molluscum looks like pearly, flesh-colored, dome-shaped bumps on the skin. They usually do not hurt or itch. Most people have only a few bumps, and sometimes a person can have molluscum and not even notice it.

What Is Molluscum Contagiosum?

Molluscum contagiosum is a common disease of the skin caused by a virus. It is not a serious condition. It can occur in children and adults. The virus can cause bumps anywhere on the body. In adults, it is common to find bumps in the genital area.

How Do You Get This Infection?

Molluscum is spread by skin contact with someone else who has the molluscum virus. In adults, the bumps (or lesions) are most often found in the area of the genitals and most of the time the virus is spread by sexual contact with someone who is infected. The virus can be spread by non-sexual transmission such as using clothing or towels that have been contaminated with the virus.

Does Everyone Who Comes In Contact With The Virus Get The Infection?

Molluscum contagiosum is a mildly contagious condition. Not everyone who comes into contact with it will get it. Molluscum can appear one week to six months after a person comes in contact with it.

How Is Molluscum Treated?

The average duration of untreated Molluscum contagiosum averages two years but ranges from 2 weeks to four years. Individual lesions usually resolve in two months. It is advisable to have the lesions treated to prevent spread of the virus to other parts of your body or spread to other persons. Treatment consists of removing the pearly core of the lesion and using some type of chemical or physical agent to destroy the base. Some advise no treatment because this is usually a very mild condition, it is not serious, and will often go away on its own after a time.

Are There Any Complications If I Don't Get Treated?

Occasionally, the Molluscum may become infected, requiring treatment with antibiotics. In order to help prevent this, do not squeeze them or try to treat them yourself. There are no known long term complications of this virus infection.

Should I Stop Having Sex If I Have Molluscum?

As mentioned above, this is a mildly contagious condition. If you want to be sure not to give it to anyone, it would be best not to have sex until the lesions are removed by treatment. Some advise that since it is not a serious infection, it is not necessary to avoid sex if you have this condition.

How Can Molluscum Be Prevented?

The only way to prevent molluscum is not to have contact with someone you know who has the infection. However, it has been reported that some people may have contracted Molluscum from sharing towels, etc.