

7. What is the treatment for Molluscum contagiosum?

- MC eventually shed when the immunity overpowers the virus. It can resolve spontaneously. But this may take months to years. In the meantime, multiplying lesions are a source of anxiety to parents. Children are offered therapy that is not too intimidating.
- Options include application of potassium hydroxide, cantharidine application (not easily available), gentle application of liquid nitrogen, topical retinoids and imiquimod. Extraction with a curette may be performed. Pricking the lesions with sterile needle followed by expression of the cheesy material with fine forceps can be done by the dermatologist. Cryotherapy, and electrodesiccation may be helpful. Your dermatologist will guide you to the most appropriate option depending on the situation.
- Many of the treatments require multiple sittings and repeat examination at 2-4 week intervals may be needed.

8. Are there any oral treatments for Molluscum contagiosum?

- No oral antiviral medicines are effective for molluscum. Oral medicines to improve the immune response against pox virus may be helpful.

9. Can Molluscum contagiosum recur?

- Recurrence can occur based on the immune status of the individual to pox virus. If the lesions are not removed totally, auto-inoculation can cause recurrence.

10. Can a child with Molluscum contagiosum be sent to school?

- A child with Molluscum can attend to school and do all routine activities. The condition is not highly contagious like chickenpox infection and does not require isolation.

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MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM



INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF DERMATOLOGISTS, VENEREOLOGISTS AND LEPROLOGISTS

- What is Molluscum contagiosum?
- How can one get Molluscum contagiosum?
- How does the infection spread?
- How does Molluscum contagiosum appear?
- What should one do if he/ she gets Molluscum contagiosum?
- Are there tests to confirm the diagnosis of Molluscum contagiosum?
- What is the treatment for Molluscum contagiosum?
- Are there any oral treatments for Molluscum contagiosum?
- Can Molluscum contagiosum recur?
- Can a child with Molluscum contagiosum be sent to school?

1. What is Molluscum contagiosum?

- Molluscum contagiosum is a common viral skin infection caused by Molluscum contagiosum virus (MCV).
- It is more common in children compared to adults.



2. How can one get Molluscum contagiosum?

- Molluscum contagiosum infection indicates impaired immunity against the pox virus.
- Children are more prone since their immune system does not handle the virus too well. The child is otherwise healthy. In adults with multiple Molluscum contagiosum lesions or with lesions in and around genitalia, there may be evidence of decreased immune status such as HIV infection.

3. How does the infection spread?

- Molluscum contagiosum spreads readily by skin contact or by sharing of clothes and towels. Scratching or itching can allow the virus to spread to other body parts.
- In children, infection is often acquired in schools or swimming pools where sharing of towels occur. Children living in hot humid areas with poor hygienic conditions are more likely to acquire molluscum contagiosum.
- Sexual transmission can also occur.(especially in Molluscum in and around genitalia).



4. How does Molluscum contagiosum appear?

- The lesions of Molluscum contagiosum are seen as discrete, skin-coloured or pearly white raised small bumps anywhere on the skin. They appear few weeks after being exposed to the virus.
- These are commonly seen on the face, may occasionally be present on the trunk and limbs. In sexually active adults, lesions are seen on the genitals or extra genital areas such as thighs or it may be seen as multiple, confluent lesions in immunosuppressed patients.

5. What should one do if he/she gets Molluscum contagiosum?

- Consult a dermatologist since it can be easily diagnosed by the dermatologist by the clinical appearance of the lesion.

6. Are there tests to confirm the diagnosis of Molluscum contagiosum?

- A dermatologist can easily confirm the diagnosis based on the appearance of skin lesions. No laboratory tests are usually needed for diagnosis.
- Rarely, when the diagnosis is less certain, the doctor may scrape the skin tissue or do a biopsy, and examine them under a microscope to demonstrate the molluscum bodies/inclusion bodies.
- In sexually active adolescent and adults, screening for coexisting sexually transmitted disease including HIV must be done.