



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A contagious, viral infection of the skin. It usually occurs on the face in children. In adults, it usually occurs on the inner thighs, abdomen, or genitals.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Small, raised bumps on the skin.
- Bumps are firm, smooth, domed with a central pit, and skin-colored or white. The skin over the bumps is transparent and thin.
- Bumps cause eye irritation if they are on the eyelids.
- They don't hurt or itch.

CAUSES

A virus of the pox group. The germs are spread by person-to-person contact. This virus may be spread sexually. The time period from being exposed to having symptoms is usually 2 to 7 weeks. It may also be spread by touching objects that have the germs on them, such as shared clothing, towels, wash cloths, and sports equipment.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Other allergies or a family history of allergy.
- Use of drugs that cause a weak immune system.
- Outbreaks have been reported among children using swimming pools.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- To prevent spread to other parts of the body or to other people, don't scratch bumps.
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Avoid sexual contact with infected people. It is unclear if condoms are effective in preventing spread.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Outcome is good. They heal on their own without treatment in otherwise healthy people. It will take about 10 to 24 months. Treatment helps to prevent their spread to other persons and to speed up the healing time.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Some scarring can occur.
- The bumps can become irritated, inflamed, and infected by bacteria.
- The problem may recur.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- The health care provider can diagnose the disorder by a skin exam of the affected area. If needed, the diagnosis can be confirmed with a skin scraping and microscopic study.
- Treatment is not always needed. In some cases, drugs may be recommended for treatment.
- Bumps may be removed with surgery. Options include cutting, burning electrically or chemically, or by freezing.

MEDICATION

- Painless, medicated drops may be applied by your health care provider.
- Other drugs may be prescribed that you can apply to the bumps yourself.

ACTIVITY

No limits, except to avoid sexual relations until the bumps disappear.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of molluscum contagiosum.
- A reinfection occurs after treatment.
- New unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side effects.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page