

MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

What is Molluscum Contagiosum?

Molluscum contagiosum is a viral skin infection that causes raised bumps, or lesions. The lesions can vary in size from tiny to quite large and are flesh colored, donut-shaped and can appear anywhere on the body.

How is it Molluscum Contagiosum spread?

1. Sexual contact (oral, anal, vaginal or skin to skin contact) with someone that has a lesion.
2. Nonsexual methods such as sharing items that have been in contact with the bumps (towels, clothes, toys).

What are the symptoms of Molluscum Contagiosum?

- A bump or lesion will usually appear about 2 to 3 months after coming in contact with infectious material. Lesions can sometimes appear as early as 7 days or as late as six months after contact.
- May have one or many lesions
- Lesions in adults may appear on the lower abdomen, thighs, legs, genitals or buttocks.
- Lesions in children are often located on the face, upper body, and arms.

How is Molluscum Contagiosum diagnosed?

Molluscum contagiosum is easily diagnosed by its appearance

How is Molluscum Contagiosum treated?

Bumps or lesions can be treated with cryotherapy: a procedure in which the lesions are "frozen" off with liquid nitrogen.

Is follow up necessary?

No

Considerations and possible complications

- Without treatment it can continue for up to two years
- The bumps can spread to other areas of the body by scratching or shaving
- There are no long term consequences related to molluscum contagiosum

Continued...

www.healthunit.com

How can you avoid getting and spreading molluscum contagiosum?

- Keep area and bumps covered
- Do not share towels, clothing or personal items
- Avoid direct skin to skin contact with infected persons
- Avoid sexual contact when a partner has bumps or sores
- Wash hands well after contact with bumps
- Do not shave the area where the molluscum are as this will spread the bumps

Since molluscum contagiosum can be spread through skin to skin contact, condoms do not provide protection from lesions on the thighs, legs, buttocks, and some areas of the genitals (depending on where the lesions are).

How can I reduce my chances of getting and spreading molluscum contagiosum

- Consider abstinence
- Using condoms/dental dam **every time**, even if you are using another form of birth control
- Do not share sex toys
- Talk to your partner

Get tested:

- After your last partner
- When starting a new relationship
- If the condom broke or after having unprotected sexual intercourse

To help prevent STIs, get vaccinated for Hepatitis A, B and HPV

Source:

Wong, T. (2006) Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections 2006 Edition
www.publichealth.gc.ca/sti

*For more information, contact the Sexual Health Promotion Team
at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317
or visit www.healthunit.com*

Revised September 2011

DISPONIBLE EN FRANÇAIS