

Molluscum Contagiosum

What is Molluscum Contagiosum?

Molluscum contagiosum is a viral skin infection that causes raised bumps. The bumps 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?

- Sexual contact (oral, anal, vaginal or skin to skin contact) with someone that has a bump.
- 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 will usually appear about two to three months after coming in contact with infectious material. Bumps can sometimes appear as early as seven days or as late as six months after contact.
- May have one or many bumps
- Bumps in adults may appear on the lower abdomen, thighs, legs, genitals or buttocks.
- Bumps 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 are "frozen" off with liquid nitrogen.

Is follow up needed?

No

Things to think about...

- 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

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
- 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 bumps are).

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

- Avoid sex
- Using condoms or a dental dam every time, even if you are using another form of birth control
- Do not share sex toys

To reduce your risk of STIs, get tested:

- After your last partner, before every new partner
- After unprotected sex, injection drug use, snorting or crack pipes.
- To help prevent STIs, get vaccinated against hepatitis A, B, and HPV.

For more information please contact The Clinic at 519-663-5446.

References

¹Wong, T. (2006) Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections 2006 Edition Retrieved from <http://www.publichealth.gc.ca/sti>

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