



MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

WHAT CAUSES MOLLUSCUM?

Molluscum are smooth, pearly, flesh-colored skin growth caused by a pox virus. They begin as small bumps and may grow as large as a pencil eraser. Many have a central pit where the virus bodies live. Usually, molluscum are found on the face and body, but may grow near the mouth or the eye. Molluscum can be itchy and the skin around the growths may become inflamed or infected. If secondary bacterial infection occurs, pox-like indented scars may occur with or without treatment. The bumps usually last from two weeks to two years, and can go away by themselves.

Molluscum is most often transmitted via water, therefore anyone with an infection should not swim in a public pool or share a bath with siblings until all lesions have resolved. The molluscum may also be passed from child to child by direct contact.

TREATMENT:

Although molluscum will eventually resolve, lesions spread easily, may become infected, may be itchy or irritated, and are sometimes cosmetically objectionable. For these reasons, they are often removed.

There are several treatment options ranging from prescription medication to physically expressing the cores that contain the virus. Determining the best treatment depends on the age of the patient and the size and location of the growths. Therefore, an office evaluation is necessary to determine the most appropriate treatment method for any given patient.