



---

## MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

---

### What is it?

Molluscum contagiosum is a common skin infection caused by a virus that results in small, smooth-surfaced bumps on the skin. It usually affects children, but teenagers and adults can get it too. Most people develop only 5 to 10 lesions, but some develop dozens.

### How does someone get molluscum?

Molluscum contagiosum is spread by close contact with someone else who has it. It is considered mildly contagious. Once someone has molluscum, scratching and picking can spread it to other parts of the body.

### How long does it last?

Molluscum usually disappears in 6 to 24 months, even without treatment.

### How is it treated?

#### 1. To treat or not to treat?

Because molluscum are harmless and have a natural tendency to disappear, some doctors recommend not treating them. The treatment can be painful and cause small scars or discoloration. In addition, treatments often need to be repeated 2 or more times.

The problem is that some people will develop many lesions while waiting for the condition to disappear. Your doctor may recommend treatment if the molluscum are in areas of friction (for example, the armpit), or the molluscum seem to be spreading rapidly.

#### 2. Removal techniques

There is no successful home treatment for molluscum. Doctors can destroy the lesions with freezing (cryotherapy), scraping, or using chemicals.

### CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF:

- A molluscum looks infected.
- The molluscum are spreading rapidly.