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90 Presidential Plaza • Syracuse, NY 13202

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Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Molluscum Contagiosum

(mol-lus-cum kun-tay-jee-o-sum)

What is molluscum contagiosum? Molluscum is a virus that affects the skin and causes white or flesh colored bumps. The bumps usually do not itch, but kids will often pick at them. When they pick them, they can spread them to other parts of their body.

What do they look like? They are raised, white bumps that sometimes have a dimple in the center. They usually are filled with white material. When they are picked the white material comes out and can be mistaken for pus. The bumps can appear anywhere on the body, even the face and eyelids.

Can they be spread to other people? Yes, they are very contagious, especially to other children. Older children and adults do not get them as often. People who have problems with their immune system can also get them.

Do they need to be treated? Mild cases with only a few bumps usually do not need treatment. If you leave them alone they will go away by themselves but it may take several months to years. Molluscum can be treated if there are many bumps or you are worried about them spreading to others. Your doctor may freeze the bumps or apply a chemical to the bumps. They will get irritated, red, and large, and then go away. Your doctor may also give you a cream that you can use at home every day. It usually takes several visits to the doctor before they are gone. It is important to follow the doctor's instructions or the treatment is not likely to work.

Today your doctor has recommended: _____
