



Kapa'a Pediatrics, LLC

Molluscum Contagiosum

Definition: A very common viral infection of the skin that results in round, firm, painless bumps ranging in size from a pinhead to pencil eraser. Pictures can be found online. If the bumps are scratched or injured, the virus can spread to surrounding areas. It can look very similar to common warts, but it spreads much faster and the treatment is different.

Natural Course: Usually it takes weeks to 2 years for the molluscum to go away without any treatment. It is very rare to have an serious complications from molluscum. Since so many children have molluscum we generally do not recommend any treatment. If any of the following complications do occur, then we would recommend treatment.

1. Eczema can get severe with molluscum. If your child has eczema that is getting worse then we often recommend removal of molluscum.
2. Child picks at mollusum. Excessive scratching of the molluscum that could cause long term scarring or increased risk of infection.
3. Molluscum continues to get infected by bacteria causing them to turn into small abscesses.
4. Child is getting teased at school because of the molluscum.
5. Molluscum is in an area that gets rubbed continuously, such as the armpit, which causes the patient irritation, and rapid spreading.

Treatment: If there is an indication for removal, we apply an almost painless chemical to the molluscum that causes a small blister within 1-2 days. After the blister pops the molluscum usually disappear. Sometimes additional treatments are needed if there is extensive involvement. If there are many molluscums that are treated in one area the blistering can cause some discomfort. The scar from the blister is very superficial and does not cause long term scarring and will eventually go away after a few months.

*** Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician. (808) 634-8011 ***