



Molluscum contagiosum



This is a common viral infection of the skin caused by poxvirus. It mainly occurs on the hands, arms, face, neck and armpits. It presents as round, firm, painless papules. Without treatment, these papules usually disappear within 6 months to 2 years. It can occur at any age group but mainly in young children between 1- 5 years of age.

Molluscum contagiosum spreads through

- direct person-to-person contact
- through contact with contaminated objects like toys, towels
- through sexual contact

It is important to keep the area where there are the papules clean and covered with clothing or a waterproof bandage so that others do not touch them and become infected with molluscum. Do not share towels, clothing, or other personal items

To help prevent the spread of the virus:

- **Wash your hands regularly.** Keeping your hands clean can help prevent spreading the virus.
- **Avoid touching or scratching the papules.** This can lead to further spread of infection.
- **Avoid sharing personal items.** This includes clothing, towels, hairbrushes or toys.
- **Cover the papules.** Use a bandage to cover your papules if cannot be covered with clothing to avoid that another person may come in contact with them.





There should be no reason why a child with molluscum infection should not be allowed to go to day care centres, nurseries or school. However, the child must cover the papules to protect other children and teachers from touching them and getting infected with this virus, and also to prevent the child from touching and scratching the papules so as not to spread it to other parts of their body. These papules are either covered with clothes if found on abdomen or back or upper arms or legs or else with watertight bandages if found on exposed areas like hands or face. The child's hand while at school should be washed frequently with soap and water or disinfectant wipes and not allowed to share his/her toys with other children.

Treatment may be offered using creams/gels applied directly to the skin or with cryotherapy. It is not necessary that one has to stay away from school, work or stopping daily activities.

