



Molluscum Contagiosum

Molluscum contagiosum is a skin infection caused by the molluscum contagiosum virus (MCV). It is a mild condition which is easily treated, but eventually resolves by itself if not treated.

Symptoms

The incubation period for molluscum contagiosum is between 1 week and 6 months.

Molluscum contagiosum appears as smooth, round, pearly lumps with a central core. The lumps may be located on or around the genitals (for example in the pubic area, on the abdomen or inner thighs). Usually between ten and twenty lumps appear, but this may vary.

The lumps are painless but sometimes may be slightly itchy, especially after treatment.

Without treatment, the condition can persist for 6 months to 2 years, although any one lump will usually clear up in 2 to 3 months.

Transmission

The molluscum contagiosum virus is passed from one person to another by skin-to-skin contact. In adults with symptoms on or near the genitals, this means sexual contact may transmit the infection.

It may also be possible for MCV to be transmitted on clothing or towels.

The lumps can be spread from one part of the body to another (not necessarily the genitals) by scratching.

Complications

The most common complication of molluscum contagiosum is bacterial infection, which may cause the lumps to become red and sore. However, redness and soreness may also be signs that the lumps are about to disappear naturally.

If you experience these symptoms and they don't improve quickly, you should consult a doctor in case antibiotic treatment is required.

Treatment

Although molluscum contagiosum lesions may resolve by themselves, treatment can shorten the infection.

Several effective treatments are available. In most cases, the lumps only require a single treatment, although they may take a couple of weeks to disappear.

At Clinic 275, molluscum contagiosum is treated by cryotherapy (freezing) with liquid nitrogen.

After treatment, the lumps may become irritated, itchy or sore. Bathing in salt water may help relieve these symptoms. Do not scratch any irritated areas after treatment, as this may spread the infection.

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Sexually Transmitted Diseases Services

Royal Adelaide Hospital

Free and confidential advice, testing and treatment for all STDs including HIV/AIDS

No appointment necessary

Monday, Thursday & Friday

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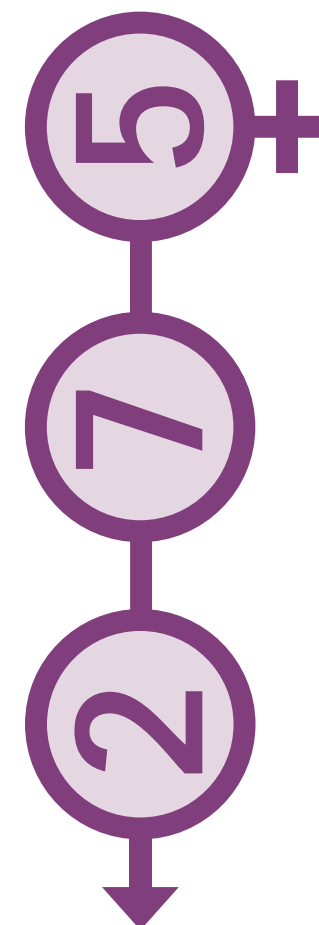
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clinic

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