

What is the treatment for molluscum contagiosum?

Molluscum will eventually clear without treatment; however treatment may clear the rash more quickly. There is a small risk of scarring or pigment changes to the skin with treatment which can be permanent.

- Freezing treatment with liquid nitrogen.
- Occasionally a cream called Aldara can be used if there are a lot of mollusca. This will be decided by the Consultant at the Sexual Health Clinic.

The first treatment can be a little uncomfortable but is very quick.

There is no treatment that gets rid of the virus in the skin, so sometimes molluscum can recur after treatment.

Does my partner need treatment?

Not unless they develop symptoms.

Most people who are exposed to the virus never develop the rash. There is no test to see whether someone is carrying the virus.

For Further Information:

Phone the Department of Sexual Health on **01202 704536**, and ask to speak to a Health Advisor.

Alternatively phone NHS direct on **0845 4647** or visit **www.nhsdirect.co.uk**

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Providing the excellent care we
would expect for our own families.

Department of Sexual Health
The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,
Castle Lane East, Bournemouth,
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If you have any queries or concerns about your care at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) would be happy to help you and can be contacted on **01202 704886/704301** or **pals@rbch.nhs.uk**.

If you would like this leaflet printed in a larger font, please contact the Communications Team on **01202 704905** during the office hours of 8.30am-5pm Monday - Friday.



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**The Royal Bournemouth
and Christchurch Hospitals**
NHS Foundation Trust

Molluscum Contagiosum

Department of Sexual Health

What does molluscum contagiosum look like?

The skin develops small lumps which are pearly-white or slightly pink. Each lump (molluscum) looks like a small wart and is round, firm, and about 1-5 mm across. A tiny dimple often develops on the top of each molluscum. If you squeeze a molluscum, (which we don't recommend you do!) a white cheesy fluid comes out.

In adults mollusca usually develop on the pubic area, the genitals and the upper thighs, however they can appear on any part of the body.

What causes molluscum contagiosum?

It is caused by a virus and can be passed on by skin-to-skin contact. Once one area of skin is affected the rash can spread to nearby areas of your skin.

In adults the virus is commonly passed on by close physical contact with sexual partners.

How long will molluscum contagiosum last?

Typically, each molluscum lasts about 6-12 weeks, crusts over, and then goes. However, new ones tend to appear as old ones are going as the virus spreads to other areas of skin. Therefore, crops of mollusca may appear to come and go for several months. It commonly takes 12-18 months before the rash goes completely.

Is molluscum contagiosum serious?

No. Mollusca do not lead to any long-term health problems. They will eventually clear without the need for treatment (but this may take up to 18 months).

Occasionally, the skin next to a molluscum becomes infected with bacteria. This can be treated with antibiotics.

How is it diagnosed?

If you think you have molluscum contagiosum it is important to see your local GUM clinic or your GP to confirm the diagnosis.

The diagnosis is made by looking at the rash. There are no other tests needed.

As molluscum is often sexually transmitted, it is recommended that you also have a check-up for other common sexually transmitted infections.