



Programs for Parents, Inc.
Comprehensive Services for Families & Children

YOUR MONTHLY HEALTH TIP FROM PFP

A VIRUS THAT AFFECTS THE SKIN: MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

Molluscum Contagiosum is a skin disease caused by a virus. The virus causes a rash that appears as small, flesh colored bumps on the skin with a hard, indented seed-like center. The virus is mildly contagious and usually spreads to other areas of the affected child's body rather than to other children. The virus can spread from person to person by close contact with the rash.

The incubation and contagious periods are:

- ◆ Incubation usually between 2 and 7 weeks, but may be as long as 6 months
- ◆ Contagious period is unknown

If a child in your care has been diagnosed with Molluscum Contagiosum, the following are some steps you can take to help limit the spread of this virus:

- ◆ Wash your hands and the child's hands after touching the bumps
- ◆ Do not share towels used by the infected child
- ◆ Teach the child that scratching the rash may cause further spread of the virus to another place on her body
- ◆ Do not let the child pick at the bumps as this may cause an opening in the skin which may become infected with bacteria
- ◆ Molluscum Contagiosum bumps do not need to be covered

Children with Molluscum Contagiosum do **not need to be excluded from child care**. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that "Molluscum Contagiosum is not an infection control issue for a group care setting." **Treatment** of the rash is not recommended for children and the virus will go away with time. **Adults** with Molluscum Contagiosum may decide to treat the rash with peeling agents such as salicylic or lactic acid. When a child is scratching the bumps, it is a good idea to put a cool compress on the area to reduce itchiness. Keep a small plastic bag of ice in the freezer and wrap in a paper towel before applying to the area that feels itchy.

**If you have any questions or concerns
regarding Molluscum Contagiosum
please call the Warmline
at 1-800-713-9006
and press the *star key
to speak with a pediatric nurse.**

