Molluscum still contagious after treatment? [1]

Hey Alice,

A couple of months ago, I realized that I had Molluscum Contagiosum. I went to a doctor and had that confirmed and I started the treatment and now the bumps are gone and there is nothing left. So I was wondering whether I could still be contagious or not because I am about to start seeing somebody and I need to make sure that I don't have anything. :)

Answer

Dear Reader,

Mollusca are typically small, skin colored bumps or lesions that appear singly or in groups and can be found anywhere on the body. These bumps are caused by a virus that is usually transmitted through skin-to-skin contact with an infected person. Though it is less likely to occur, it can also be spread through sharing contaminated objects such as towels, washcloths, clothes, or gym equipment.

If left untreated, mollusca usually disappear on their own. It can take anywhere between six months and four years for them to disappear completely. For those with weakened immune systems, the bumps may take longer to clear up. Since mollusca are more likely to be transmitted when bumps are present, some people have them removed. A health care provider may use freezing, scraping, electrosurgery, laser cautery, or chemical agents to remove the bumps.

After bumps have disappeared or are removed, new bumps can appear for up to six months (though they tend to clear after about two to four months after treatment for most people). The good news is once the bumps have cleared, this is a signal that the virus is gone and a person is typically no longer contagious. It's possible to get molluscum contagiosum again? having had it before does not prevent you from being infected another time. If new bumps appear at another time, it's likely due to contact with another infected person or contaminated items.

Asking whether or not you could still be contagious shows that you not only care about yourself, but about others as well. It may be a good idea to keep an eye out for additional bumps that might appear following your treatment. Covering up any new bumps with watertight bandages will help minimize the risk of transmitting to another person. Just make sure to remove the bandages at night (as long as there is no risk of contact with another person) to keep your skin healthy. Additionally, safer sex is a good idea when people are
interested in protecting themselves and their partner(s). As you may know, the first step in protecting yourself and potential partners is open and honest communication. Sharing your experiences and making time to discuss the situation will only serve to make the relationship stronger. You may also want to have some information (this Q&A perhaps) with you during the talk.

Congratulations on meeting some new and interesting,

Alice!

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