Information for Informed Consent  
Treatment of Molluscum

**What is molluscum contagiosum?**
Molluscum is a kind of virus that causes small bumps on the skin. There is often a tiny dimple in the middle of each bump. They are usually seen on the main body, the inner thighs, and the genitals. They can appear around the opening of the vagina, on the shaft of the penis or scrotum, and on or near the anus.

Most of the time there are no symptoms. Sometimes, the bumps get itchy.

The virus is spread from one person to another by skin touching skin. Scratching or other irritation may make them spread.

**Before getting treatment for molluscum, you need to know the most common benefits, risks, side effects, and other choices you have. We are happy to answer any questions you have.**

**How is molluscum treated?**
There are different ways to treat molluscum. Treatment includes those done by a doctor or nurse and those you can do at home. Some may not be available here. Your doctor or nurse will help you decide which method is best for you.

Even if the bumps go away with treatment, they may return. This is because the treatments can remove the bumps, but they don’t cure the virus that causes it.

**What are the treatments done by a doctor or nurse?**

- **One way is to take out the material inside the bump.** You may get medicine to numb the area. Then your doctor or nurse will open up the top of the bump and clean it out.
  - There may be mild scarring.
  - You may have pain during the procedure.

- **Bichloroacetic acid (BCA) and Trichloroacetic acid (TCA) — Acid that is put on the bumps by a doctor or nurse to destroy them. It is usually put on once a week for several weeks.**
  - There may be mild scarring.
  - You may have burning for a few minutes after the acid is put on. You may also have mild redness, pain, itching or local swelling afterwards. It can take several weeks to completely heal.

- **Cryotherapy (freezing) — A very cold spray is put on the bumps to freeze and destroy them. Several treatments may be needed.**
  - There may be mild scarring.
  - There is usually some mild burning when the cold is first put on the warts. After treatment, sores or blisters may form and cause mild discomfort or itching for several days.

**What is the treatment you can do at home?**
- **Imiquimod** — A cream that you put on that causes your immune system to clear up the bumps. Put it on 3 times a week, for example, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. It is usually put on at bedtime. Wash it off 6 to 10 hours later. Use it until the bumps are gone but for no longer than 16 weeks. It may weaken latex condoms and diaphragms. Safety in pregnancy is not known.
  - There may be mild scarring or permanent discoloration of the skin.
  - You may have redness, pain, itching, sores, rash with blisters, or swelling for several weeks.

**What other choices do I have?**
You could choose to have no treatment. Molluscum usually goes away on its own in a few months. We can talk about your options with you, and help you with whatever you decide to do.

**What else do I need to know?**
After treatment you should:
- Keep the area clean. Don’t scratch it.
- Use a different towel for drying other parts of your body after a shower or a bath.
- Wash your hands after touching the area.
- Not have sex if it is uncomfortable.
- Apply cold compresses and/or take acetaminophen or ibuprofen to help with discomfort

No promise can be made about the outcome of your treatment. In the unlikely event that you need emergency medical care that cannot be provided at Planned Parenthood, you will be responsible for paying for it. This is the case even if Planned Parenthood sends you to a hospital because of a problem.

**Your health is important to us.** If you have any questions or concerns, please call us. We are happy to help you.

**Call us right away if you**
- Have a temperature of 100.4°F or higher that lasts more than 4 hours
- Have a bad odor or yellow discharge
- Have pain that doesn’t go away with medicine
- Don’t heal

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