



Molluscum Contagiosum Treated with Cantharidin and After Care

Molluscum Contagiosum is a very common infection of the skin caused by a poxvirus called MC1 or MC2. It causes small skin colored or red bumps on the skin. Without treatment these lesions can last up to 3 years. They can become red, scaly, and inflamed as the immune system tries to kill the virus.

Your doctor has recommended that cantharidin be applied to some or all of your child's bumps to help remove them from the skin. The average number of treatments needed to clear the bumps with cantharidin is three.

Cantharidin was first isolated in nature from the blister beetle. It is now synthetically made. When cantharidin is applied to the skin it causes a superficial blister under the bump where the liquid is applied. This usually occurs 4-6 hours after the cantharidin is placed on the skin in clinic.

Three to four hours after the treatment gently remove the bandages. It is often easier to remove the bandages after placing the chilling in a warm bath. Take a soft wash cloth and gently wash off the cantharidin. Do not scrub!

After a while, some kids complain of a "stingy" feeling on the skin where the cantharidin was applied. If the blisters pop and skin stings in the open air, apply a small amount of Vaseline or Aquaphor as needed for comfort. It is okay to cover with small bandages if this is comforting to your child.

Give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) at the appropriate dose for the age and weight of your child after your appointment, a second dose before bed and a third dose the next morning. Any stinging should subside after the first 24 hours.

Please call 251-289-1786 with any questions.