

Medicines Management Team Advisory Summary

Molluscum contagiosum is a self-limiting viral infection.
Treatment is not usually recommended

Treatment is only recommended for teenagers or adults in cases where the spots are particularly unsightly and may affect quality of life

Reasoning

- Infection clears up on its own, usually in 1 to 1.5 years
- Infection rarely causes symptoms beyond the spots
- Infection rarely interferes with everyday activities in children or adults
- Treatments can be painful and cause scarring or burning of surrounding areas as they are based on corrosive agents such as Potassium Hydroxide

Available evidence

- To date, no trial has compared watchful waiting with different treatment strategies. Most available trials are small, have poor methodological quality and are not generalizable to primary care¹
- The evidence available is “insufficient to propose any one intervention” despite the large number of options²
- A very small randomised controlled trial (n=20) evaluated potassium hydroxide 5% solution (available in UK as Molludab®) It showed some superiority but not statistically significant. Stinging and post-inflammatory pigmentary changes were also recorded²
- Further well-designed, controlled studies on treatment options are needed to provide high-quality evidence upon which to base clinical decision making

Recommended Actions

- Until robust evidence is available to support any one intervention, treatment for molluscum contagiosum is not routinely recommended

Wiltshire CCG Cost Impact

During the last 12 months, 40 prescriptions have been written for Molludab® with a cost of £499

References

1. NHS CKS scenario for Molluscum contagiosum. September 2012 <http://cks.nice.org.uk/molluscum-contagiosum#!scenario>.
2. Cochrane Review: Interventions for cutaneous molluscum contagiosum. van der Wouden, J. C., van der Sande, R., van Suijlekom-Smit, L. W., Berger, M., Butler, C. C. and Koning, S. (2011), Evid.-Based Child Health, 6: 1550–1599. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ebch.829/full>
3. Patient UK Leaflet <http://patient.info/health/molluscum-contagiosum-leaflet>