

CANTHARIDIN TREATMENT OF MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

Cantharidin, a chemical made from the extract of the “blister beetle”, is a commonly used treatment for molluscum contagiosum. Blister beetles secrete a substance which causes superficial blistering upon contact with the skin. Your doctor placed a small amount of cantharidin on some or all of the molluscum lesions. It is important to gently wash it off with soap and water about 4 hours after application. Check the sites frequently prior to this and wash sooner if blistering or pain occurs earlier.

It is expected that small blisters will form at the treatment sites that are at least twice the size of the lesions. These tend to dry up and fall off in 1-2 weeks. If blisters break open and ooze, which they often do, **apply a thin coating of petroleum jelly (Vaseline brand or generic)** and cover with a band-aid. We suggest that you purchase a new, small tube or jar. If you prefer not to wear a band-aid, apply the petroleum jelly 2-3 times a day until healed. If treated sites are uncomfortable, tepid water baths once or twice a day tend to be soothing.

Dark or light spots, or small pock marks often occur in treatment sites upon healing. Most resolve within several weeks.