

Molluscum What?

The Itch that Rashes

Thankful for the Skin

We are thankful!

November 2012

The Skin You're In

Caring Well

Thursday December 6th
7:00PM-8:30PM

Session 10:
Living with Virtues
with
Courtney Defeo
Owner of Lil Light O' Mine

For more information
visit
www.middletonpediatrics.com

Molluscum what?

You may have heard of it or perhaps you've seen it once before, but do you know what molluscum really is?

Molluscum contagiosum, usually just called molluscum, is a common skin condition caused by a pox virus, and is typically seen in children ages 2-12. It is characterized by waxy, flesh-colored bumps on the skin, and is usually concentrated on one area of the body. They can vary in size, from a pinhead to 1/4 inch in diameter, and often times they have a dimple in the center, with a white material in the core of the bump. They are firm, and while they can sometimes be mildly itchy, they are not painful.

Molluscum is spread through skin to skin contact, and although mildly contagious, children can attend school and daycare without concern. However, molluscum is easily transmitted through warm water, so it is important to keep your child out of bathtubs and hot tubs with other children.

Anyone can get molluscum, but those with dry, sensitive skin, or with issues such as eczema, are at a higher risk of

contracting the virus. Molluscum can spread if the child scratches a lesion, and then scratches another area of the skin. Licking or sucking on a molluscum can cause bumps to form around the mouth. Keeping the molluscum covered with clothing or Band-aids and keeping fingernails short can help prevent more bumps from forming.

Treatment options vary, but they are painful and often unsuccessful, as the bumps are typically found in numbers and may return after treatment. While they can be removed by freezing, acid, or using the "duct tape method," more often than not molluscum is left untreated and will disappear with time..

Call your child's pediatrician if the molluscum is located on an area of the body subject to friction (i.e. armpits), if your child picks at them (which can lead to infections), the bumps are spreading rapidly, or if you feel they are a cosmetic concern.

www.cpnonline.com

The Itch that Rashes

What is it?

Eczema is a chronic disorder of the skin that is characterized by itchy, dry patches of skin

Who gets it?

Most people with eczema present with it by 5 years of age, but a small percentage do not present until later in childhood or adulthood. In infants, eczema commonly first appears on the face and scalp. In older kids (age 2-adolescent), it most often appears in the creases of elbows and knees, but also commonly appears on the neck, ankles, wrists, and creases between buttocks and legs. It is more common in patients with allergic predisposition.

Signs/symptoms:

Often first appears as red, dry, very itchy skin with red bumps. Skin may also appear circular and scaly. Scratching makes the rash worse, which is why eczema is often referred to as "the itch that rashes". In early childhood it is not uncommon for the rash to ooze.

Over time, parts of the skin that frequently have eczema flare-ups may turn a lighter or darker color than surrounding skin. The skin may also thicken and turn somewhat leathery, a process called "lichenification".

Treatment:

It is important to treat eczema when it flares up, not only for the child's comfort, but also because untreated eczema with repeated scratching may develop a secondary bacterial infection. The treatment of eczema is a short course of a topical steroid and aggressive moisturization. However, there are several principles to keep in mind to *prevent* a flare-up, some of which are discussed below:

Prevention:

- **Moisturize twice a day with lotion that is free of excess dyes, fragrances, and chemicals (referred to as "non-comedogenic"). Also use non-comedogenic facial cleansers/body washes, shampoos, and conditioners.
- **After bath or shower, pat dry and apply moisturizer within a few minutes. This helps to really lock in the moisture.
- *Use mild, fragrance-free detergent to wash the child's clothes.
- *Cooler, short baths or showers are better than long hot ones - the latter may dry out the skin.
- *Avoid certain fabrics such as wool or coarsely-woven materials.
- *Avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.
- *Common triggers are emotional stress, excessive heat, sweating, and allergens such as pollen, mold, dust, and animal dander.

It is difficult to implement *all* of these things *all* of the time. These are just some suggestions to get you started, and you may find that even just the first two prevention methods keep the eczema under control most of the time.

Holiday Office Hours

Wednesday November 21	8:15am-12:00pm	Monday December 24	8:15am-1:00pm
Thursday November 22	Closed	Tuesday December 25	Closed
Friday November 23	8:15am-12:00pm	Tuesday January 1	Closed

HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Middleton Pediatrics will be hosting a toy drive from November 23rd-December 17th. If you would like to make a donation, please bring one new, unwrapped toy to your next appointment, or drop it by our office at your convenience. All toys collected will be donated to the Salvation Army to be distributed to families in need this holiday season.

Thankful for the Skin

"What spirit is so empty and blind, that it cannot recognize the fact that the foot is more noble than the shoe, and skin more beautiful than the garment with which it is clothed?"
 Michelangelo

INTRODUCTION

As Christmas approaches, I am reminded of something I tend to forget each year -- my wife loves her presents to be wrapped. In fact, it seems like to her the appearance of the presents before they are opened is every bit as important as the contents. This is difficult for me to understand. My thoughts and feelings on wrapping paper could pretty well be summarized with a question -- "What's the point?" Yet, to my wife, the giftwrap generates an excitement and anticipation as well as a thoughtfulness about what's inside.

In a similar way, students of anatomy and physiology tend to be amazed by the heart, have a deep appreciation for the lungs, and a curious fascination of the brain but rarely even think much of the skin. It's just covering the really important parts. However, like everything about the human body, when we take a closer look at our skin, we see that it is so much more than simply a wrapping of the real gift; it is an awesome and essential part of the gift itself.

BACKGROUND

The skin is the largest organ in the human body, weighing approximately 9 pounds in an adult. Sometimes the skin is referred to as the Integumentary system, with "integument" literally meaning "a covering". (This is probably why animal skin is often called "hide", as if "hiding" the rest of the animal.) Essentially everything we can see of another person is skin. All the other amazing and unique parts of their body are behind this "covering".

STRUCTURE & FUNCTIONS

Our skin is essentially composed of two layers - the epidermis and the dermis.

The dermis is the deeper layer that is responsible for the structural strength of the skin, sort of like the framing of a house. [This strength is why it is the dermal layer of animal skin that is used for making leather]. This is also where the skin's blood vessels are.

The epidermis is the more superficial layer, and the outermost layers of the epidermis are composed mostly of dead skin cells - up to 25 layers of dead cells - filled with keratin. Keratin is a protein and is a whole other discussion in itself. Hair, nails, and skin are all composed of keratin

of varying types and in varying amounts. It is a strange thought to think that most of what you are seeing when you look at another person are dead cells.

The thickness of the skin varies depending on different epidermal layers on different part of the body - the thinnest being on our eyelids; the thickest on our palms and soles. Only thin skin has hair. Like all parts of our body, the skin is a dynamic organ, producing new cells all the time and shedding the outer layers of dead cells every couple of weeks.

Our skin has many important functions. In some ways it is like a fortress, keeping out would-be intruders and protecting the parts of the body that are not equipped to come in contact with the outside world. Our skin also functions like insulation, responsible for temperature stability and regulation.

Just as important is how our skin, along with our eyes, nose, ears, and tongue, allows us to interact with the world around us. Our skin is constantly reacting to the world around us, alerting us to dangers, sensing temperature changes, maintaining appropriate amounts of water, and on and on.

DISEASES

Just like every organ, the skin "cries out" when something is wrong. The skin's cries -- itching, acne, rash, scars, wrinkles -- can be especially troublesome because they are often so visible. As parents, you know how concerning a rash on your child can be, and many childhood conditions - some serious, some not - present with cutaneous symptoms. There are so many different diseases of the skin that an entire field of medicine, dermatology, is dedicated to skin conditions.

Orlando has many excellent dermatologists, including a wonderful pediatric dermatologist, Dr. Tace Rico. (Special thanks to Dr. Ronald Knipe, who has taken such great care with many members of my own family.)

SENSE OF WONDER

So as we recognize November as National Healthy Skin Month, it is good to stop and appreciate the wonder of creation and this remarkable, and under appreciated organ. It is so much more than just a covering, a layer veiling the gift. It is an essential part of the gift itself.

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Middleton Pediatrics is thankful for...

Ebony: "Life, health, and strength"

Arla: "Chocolate, college football, family"

Lauren: "My pregnancy, husband, and Dandelion Café"

Kelli: "Good food, great friends, and lots of laughs!"

Ginger: "My nephews, my job, and Jesus"

Liz: "Fall Florida weather, great friends and family, and an awesome team"

Lisa: "My family, great friends, and an awesome place to work."

Michelle: "God's grace and love, my incredible husband and 4 wonderful children, and our newly renovated home."

Christine: "My two sweet girls, my husband, and bacon."

Dr. Middleton: "My Wife."