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Ocular manifestation of molluscum contagiosum

Molluscum contagiosum is a common viral disease, caused by a large DNA pox virus. It is common in childhood, presenting as small, painless, firm, dome-shaped umbilicated papules. They are benign and generally self-limiting. However, it is contagious and can lead to various complications such as inflammation, pruritus, dermatitis, bacterial superinfection, and scars

Presentation

It is a clinical diagnosis and biopsy is rarely required.

A typical lesion appears as a raised, shiny, white-to-pink nodule with a central umbilication filled with cheesy material, and with lack of vasculature (see photo). Lesions enlarge slowly and may reach up to 10 mm in diameter.

Pathophysiology

When these lesions occur on or near the eyelid margin, the viral proteins spill into the conjunctival cul-de-sac to cause a chronic follicular conjunctivitis. The virus itself does not grow in the conjunctiva; rather the conjunctivitis is a toxic reaction to its proteins.

When a diagnosis is made of a persisting unilateral chronic follicular conjunctivitis, careful examination of the lid margin is pertinent to exclude molluscum contagiosum as a cause.

Other possible manifestations may include epithelial keratitis, pannus formation, conjunctival scarring, and punctal occlusion.

In patients who are immunocompromised, one may see multiple and bilateral periocular involvement.

Differential diagnosis

In older patients, sebaceous gland carcinoma must be ruled out.

Differential diagnosis includes keratoacanthoma, verruca vulgaris, squamous papilloma, milia, and SCC or BCC.

Management

Usually, molluscum contagiosum spontaneously resolves within 3-12 months but early treatment may prevent corneal complications, reduce transmission, and speed recovery.

Various treatment options exist and include simple incision or excision, incision and curettage, cryosurgery, and electrodesiccation. Removal of the lesion or curettage until it bleeds internally eliminates this condition.



■ Molluscum lesions on the lid margin can spill viral proteins into the conjunctival sac to cause a reactive follicular conjunctivitis



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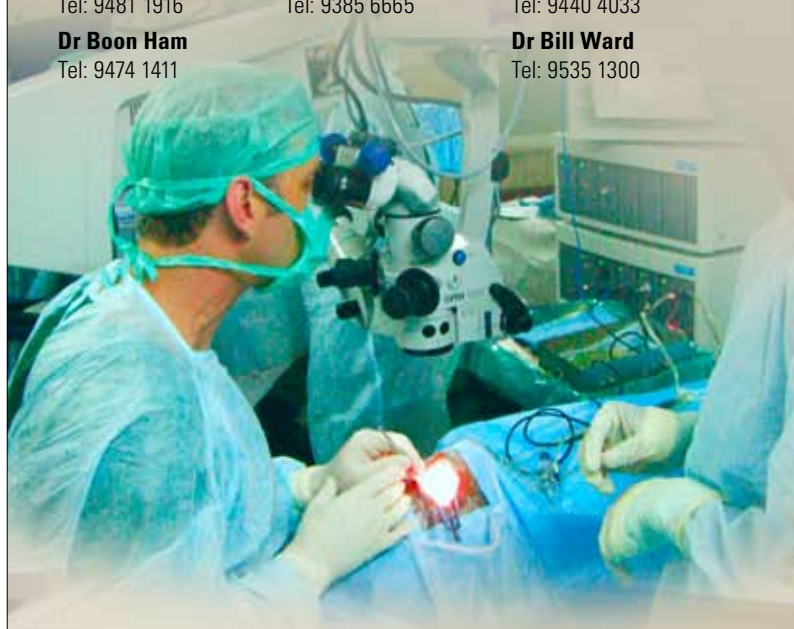
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