

Case Letter

Molluscum Contagiosum Clearance Following a Dietary Change

To the Editor:

Molluscum contagiosum (MC) is common among children (2%–8%), usually self-limiting within a few months or years.¹ Although the infection with the DNA virus molluscipox usually resolves spontaneously, there are several reasons to treat the infection, such as unattractiveness, pruritus, or its high recurrence and spreading rate. Dietary change can be a treatment of MC.

Predisposing conditions that develop with persistent MC lesions include atopic dermatitis, Darier disease, and immunodeficiencies. There are 3 methods for treating the lesions: destructive (chemical and physical), immunomodulatory, and antiviral therapy.²

Because immunodeficiencies are predisposing and immunomodulatory treatments are possible, I treated

7 patients with MC with an immunomodulatory diet consisting of adequate age-dependent portion sizes of green vegetables (5 days a week) and beef (3 days a week) combined with a daily serving of natural butter and milk (3.5% fat). These food groups contain sufficient amounts of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc, and iron necessary for proper immunologic function.³ All of the patients presented with more than 10 MC cutaneous lesions and experienced MC for a maximum of 1.5 years. They all received the same dietary advice in this open analysis. In 6 patients, the lesions completely disappeared within 5 months, and in 1 patient the lesions were reduced more than 50% but not completely (Table). None of the patients mentioned adverse effects. All of the patients reported feeling better; in 1 patient the abdominal pain also disappeared.

Patients With MC Following an Immunomodulatory Diet

Patient No.	Sex	Age, y	Duration of MC Symptoms, y	Time to Clearance, mo	Clearance, %
1	F	6.2	1.0	0.7	100
2	F	7.9	1.0	3.0	100
3	F	10.5	1.5	1.0	100
4	F	4.3	1.0	1.5	100
5	M	7.5	0.5	2.0	>50
6	F	11.5	1.0	4.0	100
7	F	1.7	0.3	5.0	100

Abbreviations: MC, molluscum contagiosum; F, female; M, male.

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Although MC is a self-limiting disease and we usually allow it to resolve on its own, a change in dietary habits can have a positive effect on reducing the MC lesions. The supposed mechanism is via immunomodulation, providing vitamins and micronutrients necessary for a healthy functioning immune system.⁴ By strengthening the immunologic functions, the poxvirus can be battled from the inside out, unlike topical therapies. This treatment differs from destructive therapies in that way. Immunomodulatory and antiviral treatments can have adverse effects,⁵ while there were no adverse effects in the patients treated with a dietary change, which is an important aspect, especially for children. Therefore, a dietary change could be an effective and healthy treatment of MC, but further research should investigate this possibility.

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