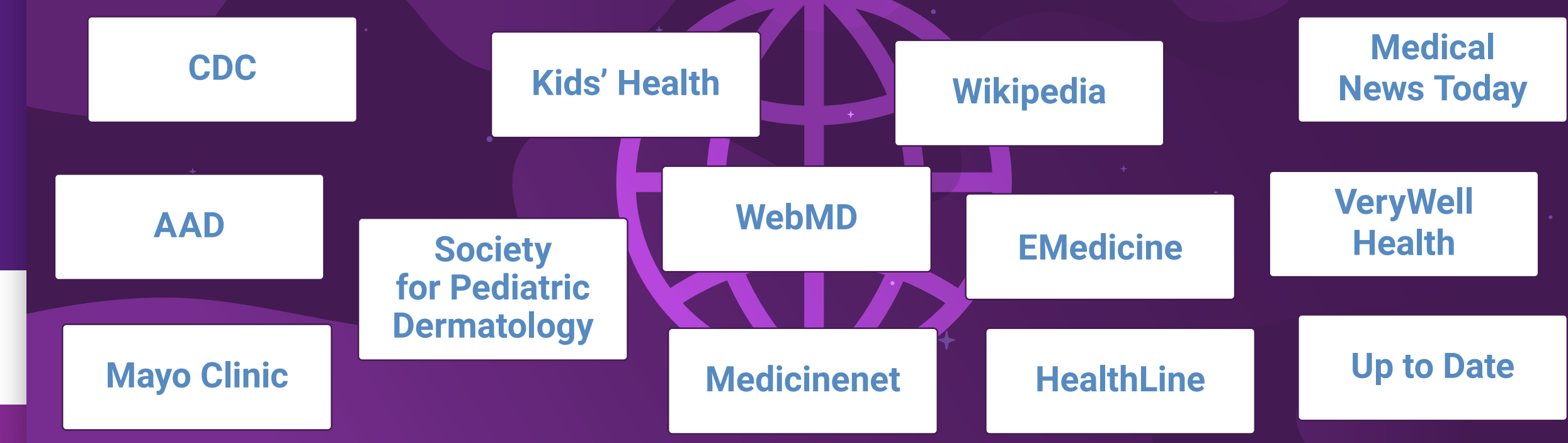


Quality of Information on Molluscum Contagiosum Disease Websites

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13 Most Commonly-Visited Molluscum Informational Websites



INTRODUCTION

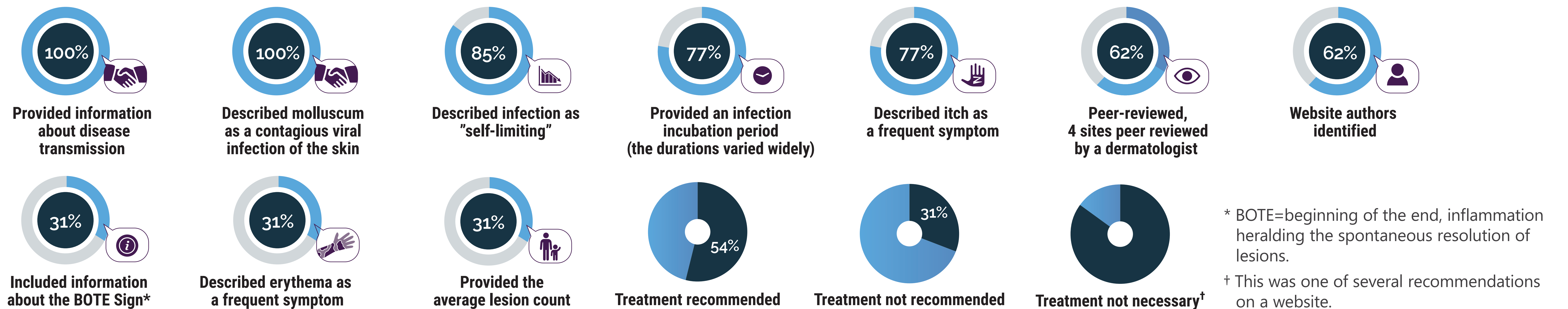
- Consumers increasingly engage in online health information-seeking and use the information to understand medical conditions and treatment options.¹
- Molluscum contagiosum is a common pediatric skin infection for which there are no clinical guidelines in the US.
 - Due to this, consumer-focused websites may vary in the quality and quantity of scientific and medical information provided.²
- This project aimed to identify the most visited informational websites about molluscum and review the information provided to consumers.

METHODS

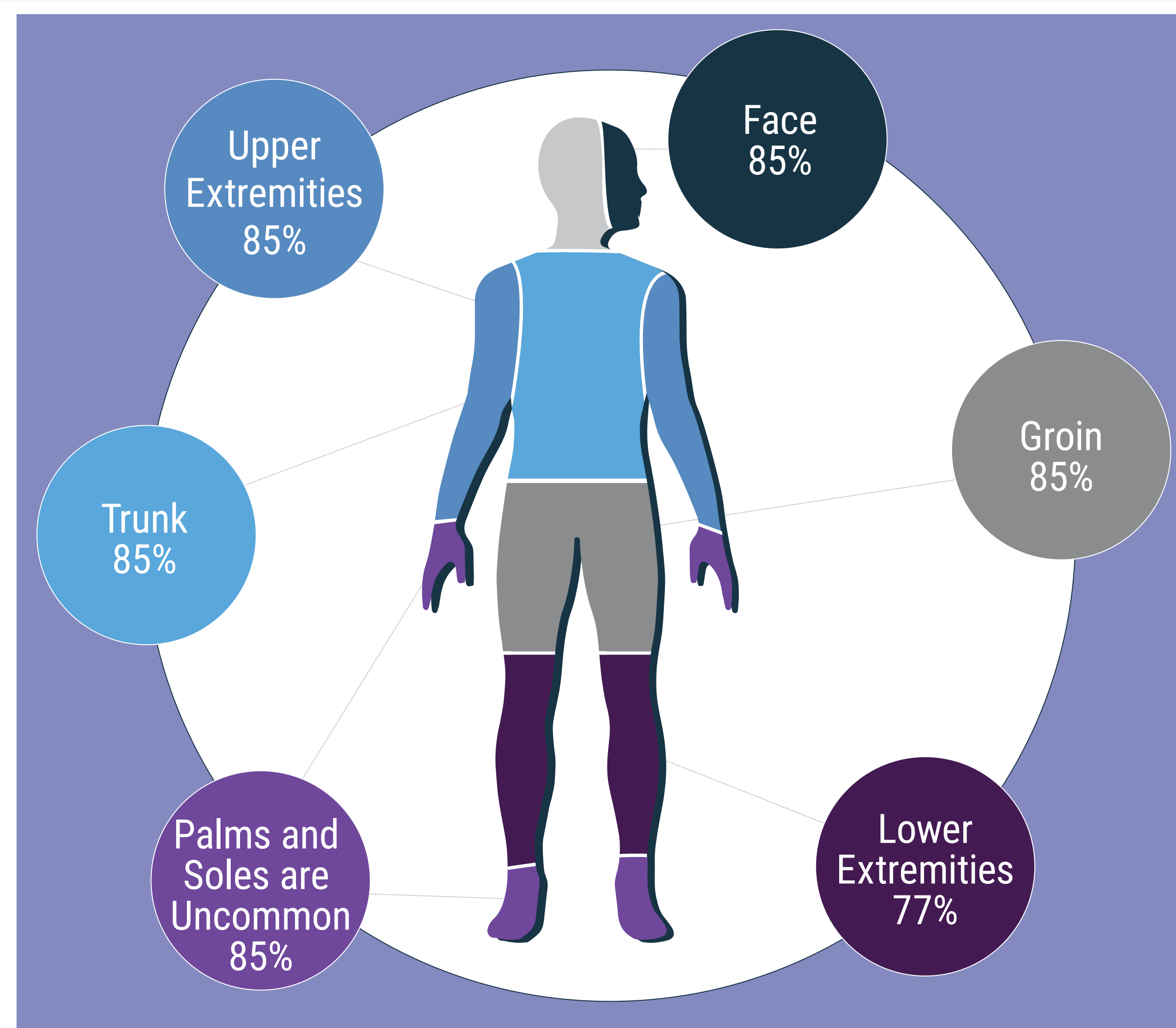
- A Google search conducted in December 2018 identified the 13 most visited informational, non-promotional consumer websites for molluscum contagiosum.
- Each website was reviewed by two authors from December 2020 through February 2021.
- Information collected (e.g., symptoms, disease duration and progression, diagnosis) was compared to peer-reviewed published literature.

RESULTS

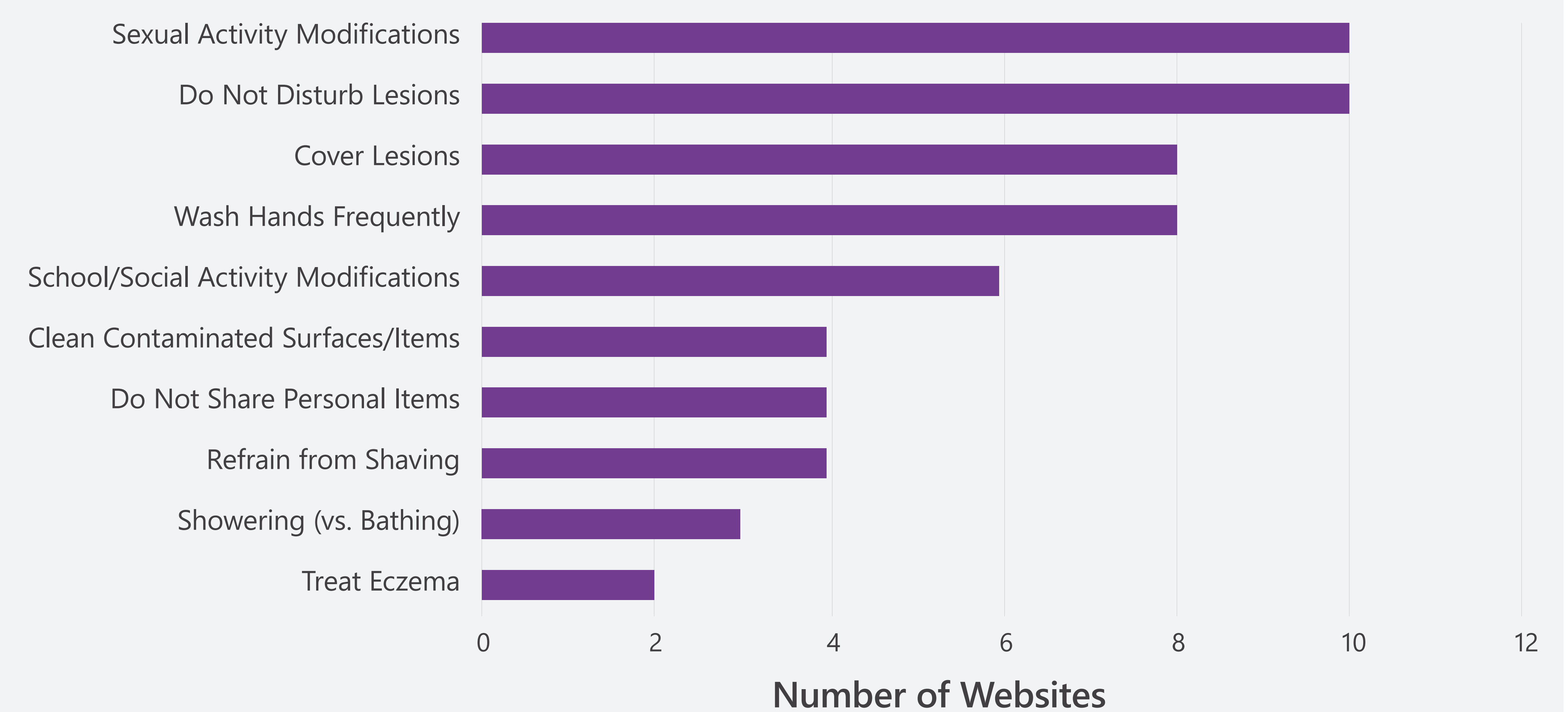
Molluscum Information By Percentage of Websites Providing the Information



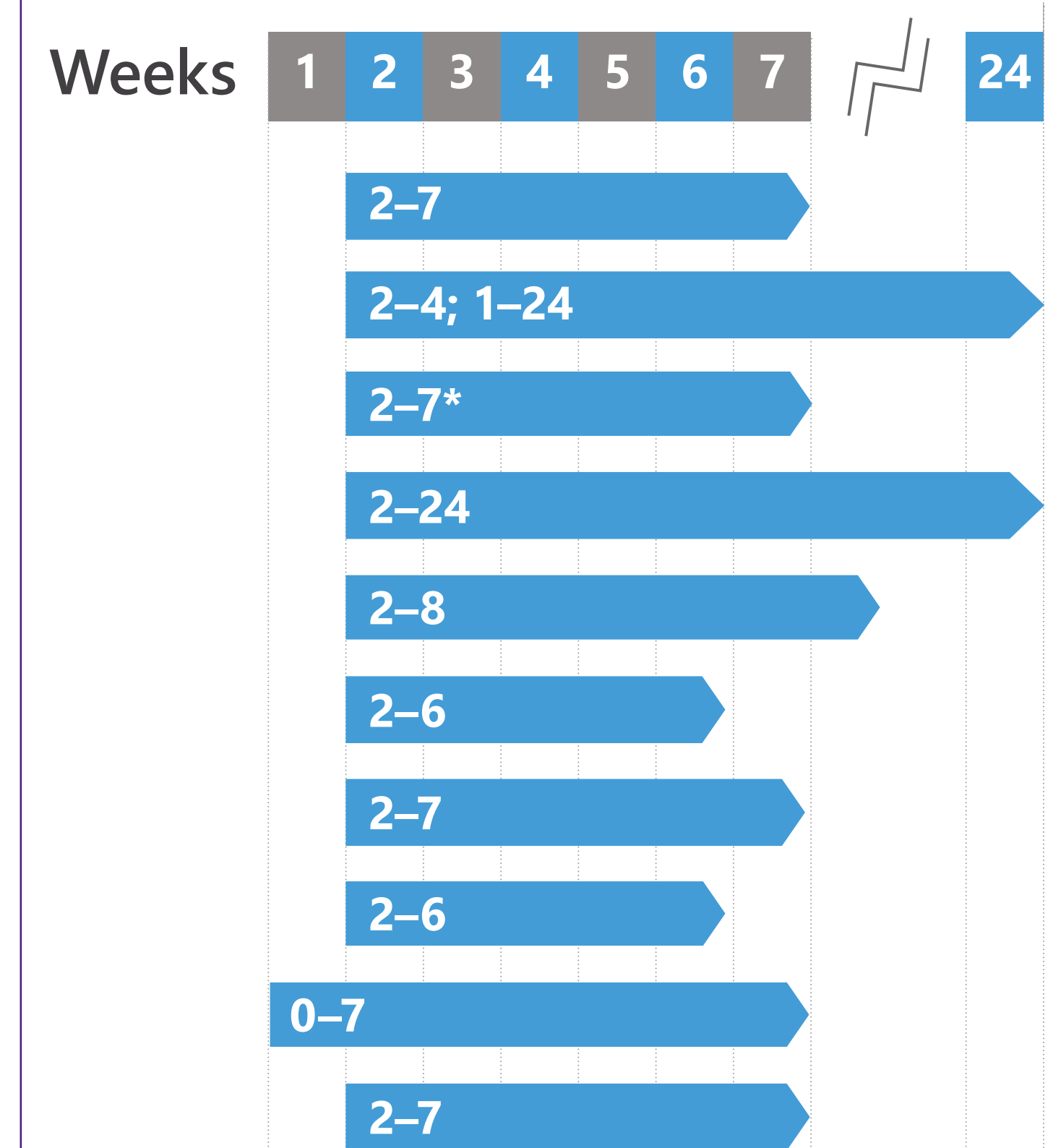
Body Regions Described as Common Locations for Lesions



Preventative Measures Mentioned on Websites

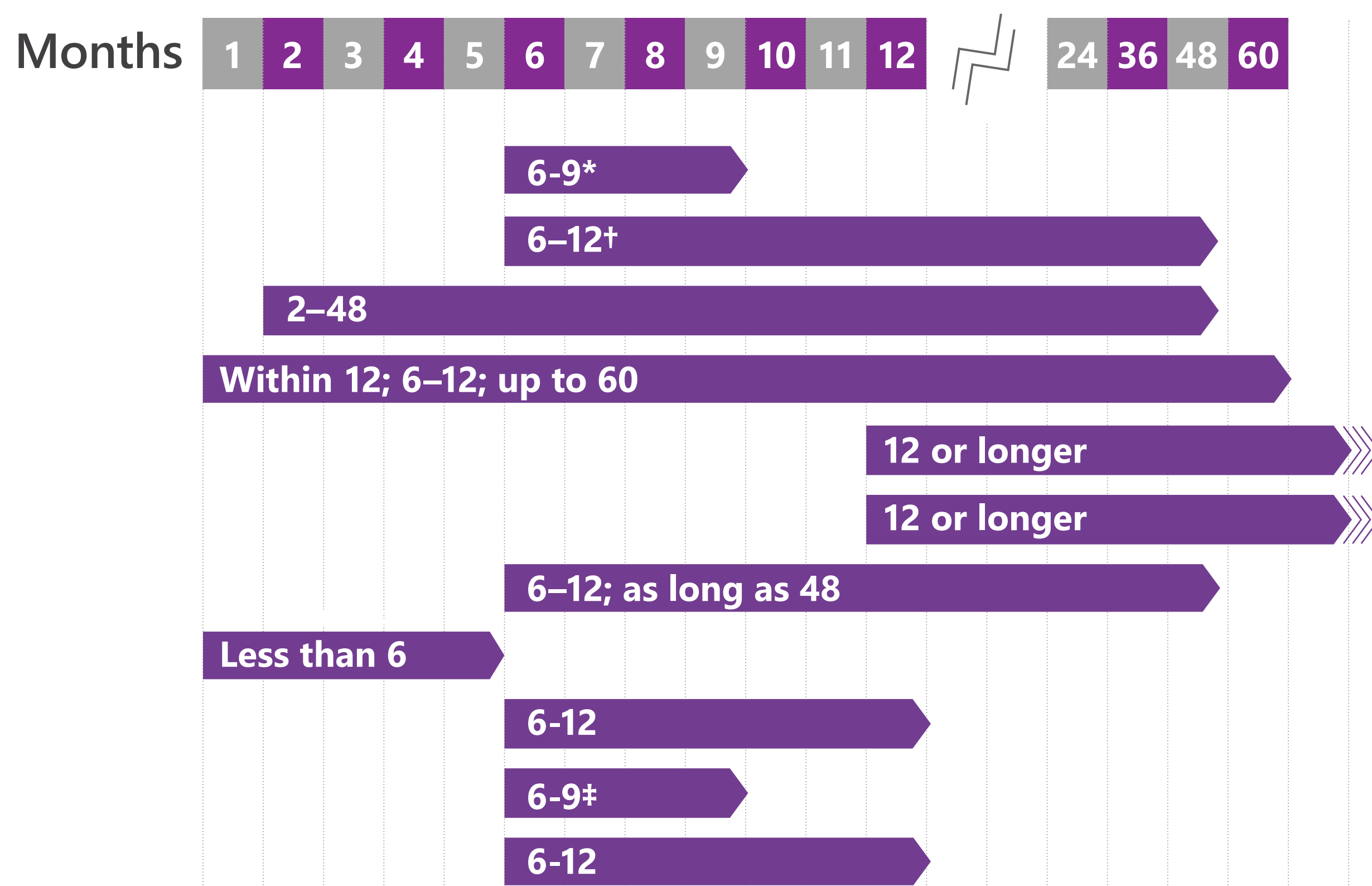


Incubation Period



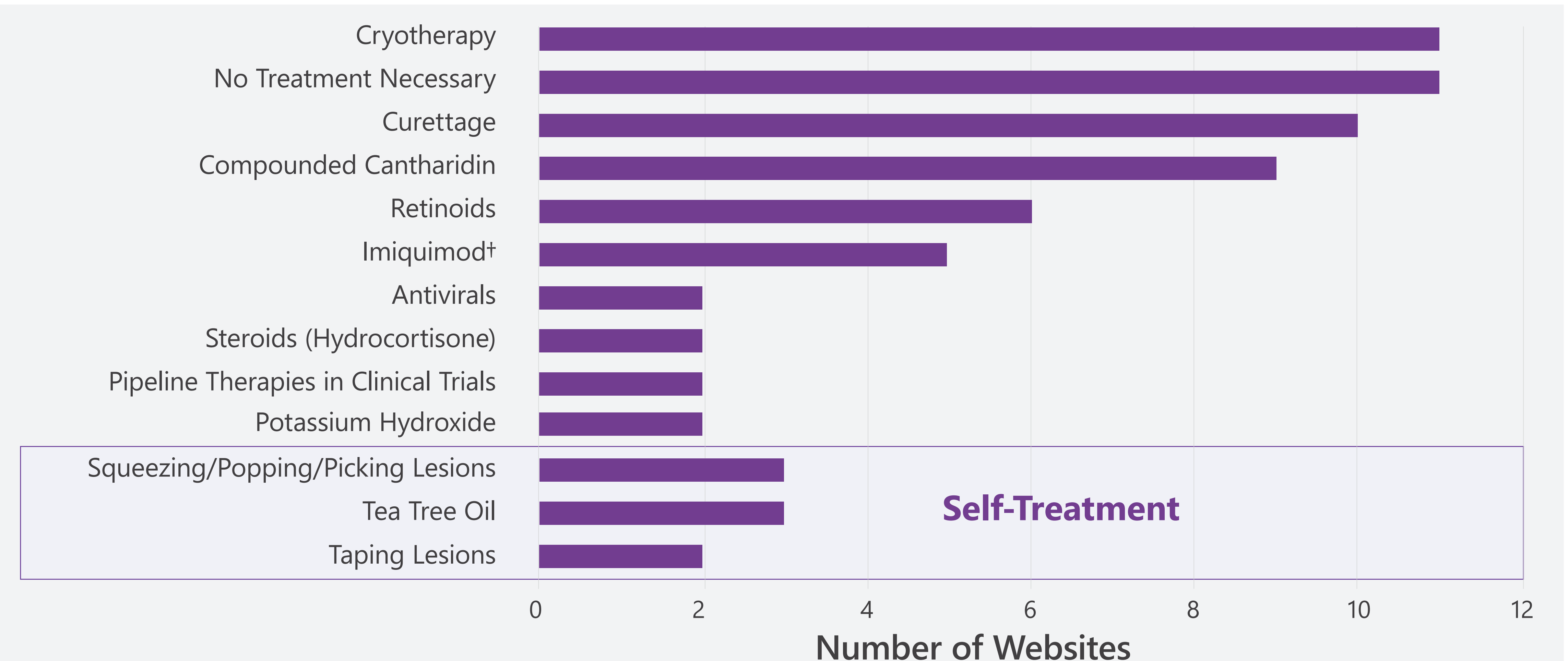
Incubation information not provided by 3 websites.
Two websites provided multiple incubation periods and are not shown in the figure: website 1) 1-6 months, average 2-7 weeks, and up to 6 months, and website 2) 2-4 weeks; 1-6 months.
* Website stated various incubation periods including 1-6 months; between 2-7 weeks, and up to 6 months.

Infection Duration



Note: one website described duration differently throughout and was not included in this figure.
* Website stated that most cases resolve within 6-9 months, while some persist for 3-4 years, and also that spontaneous resolution occurred for most patients by 18 months, although it could take up to 5 years.
† Website stated that most infections heal without intervention in 6-12 months, but may take up to 4 years.
‡ Website stated that lesions may last for a few months or years, but that the average duration is 6-9 months.

Treatment Methods Mentioned on Websites



CONCLUSIONS

- Information about molluscum contagiosum available on frequently visited informational websites was found to be highly variable in quantity and quality when compared to published literature.
- Most websites included treatment recommendations without clinical evidence of safety or efficacy from well-controlled studies.
- Preventative measures included tactics not included in published literature, including some that can cause spread of the disease.
- Sites, and the consumers who visit them, may benefit from peer-review and from using published literature as source references.

References

- Swire-Thompson Ann Rev Pub Health 2020.
- Fallis D, Fricke M. J Amer Med Informatics Assoc 2002.

Disclosures

E Siegfried clinical trials, honoraria; **S Ong** clinical trials, **J Andres** Verrica employee, **C Crosby** Verrica employee, **M Olivadoti** Verrica employee.