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Warts

Definition

Warts are small, flesh coloured growths with a rough surface arising from the skin.

Description

Warts are caused by the human papilloma virus. The virus makes skin cells multiply, causing an overgrowth of cells which form the Wart. These infections can come singly or in multiples and commonly occur on the hands.

Warts can be spread by direct skin contact and are usually painless.

Children from the age of 12 to 16 years are the most common group with Warts, although they can occur at any age.

There are different types of Wart and the plantar Wart is one variety. This painful Wart is found on the sole of the foot. It is usually more deep seated and is much harder to remove. See the topic on Plantar Warts on the Healthpoint.

Treatment options

See your Doctor for diagnosis and treatment of this condition. Ask your Doctor about the latest advice on this ailment.

Most Warts will disappear naturally within 2 years, but treatments are available to remove them sooner.

A wide range of topical ointments are available for treating warts. These topical ointments act by killing the skin cells that the Wart-causing virus lives in. When using these ointments, care should be taken to protect surrounding skin.

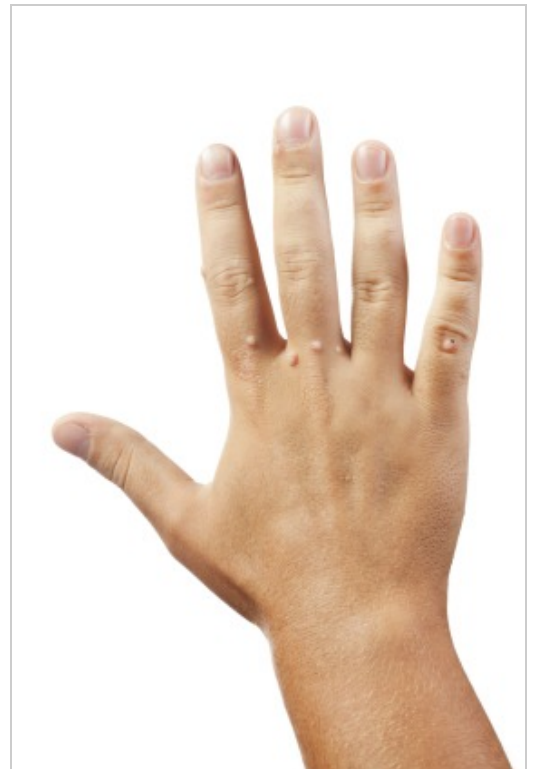
Sometimes the Doctor will freeze the Wart using liquid nitrogen. Other treatments include surgical removal and burning the Wart tissue away using a high voltage electric current. Even after successfully treating a Wart topically, it may reappear. Topical ointments are often preferable for the treatment of childhood Warts, as surgical procedures can often be too painful for young children.

Diet hints

Suggested solutions

General

» **Wart paint**



- Eat raw fresh fruits and vegetables including seeds (particularly pumpkin seeds) which will help boost the immune system.
- Try to eat a diet which is low in fat and sugar.
- Try to drink at least eight glasses of water a day.

Vitamins/minerals/herbs

Vitamins and minerals may only be of assistance if dietary intake is inadequate.

INTERNAL ONLY

- Zinc has been shown to have an important effect on the immune system and has been successfully used to boost immunity in the treatment of a variety of skin diseases. For people who have low or borderline levels of zinc, supplements may help offer resistance to infection with the wart virus by boosting immunity. And for those who have already developed warts, supplementing with zinc may provide an effective cure.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

- Goldenseal can be taken internally and applied topically. It may be valuable in fighting certain viral skin ailments. This includes warts (both genital and nongenital), which are caused by the human papillomavirus.
- Vitamin E is important for immune function and to combat viral infections. It may be beneficial in the treatment of warts both internally and externally as a cream.
- Echinacea has anti-viral properties and may enhance immune function therefore may be useful in the treatment of warts.

TOPICAL APPLICATIONS

- Aloe vera gel may be beneficial in the treatment of warts if applied topically as it has anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties.
- Tea tree oil may be beneficial if applied topically to warts, which are caused by viruses.
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- Black walnut has healing properties which may be beneficial in treating mouth and throat warts.
- Pau d'arco bark has anti-viral compounds and can be used to eliminate warts by applying directly to warts.
- Garlic oil has anti-viral properties and it may shrink unsightly but harmless common warts. Moisten a compress with garlic oil or insert a slice of fresh garlic. Leave on overnight, repeat until the wart heals. Keep oil or clove away from unaffected skin.
- Thuja occidentalis may be useful when applied topically. The tincture is applied topically morning and night. Thuja oil and ointment is also used topically. Thuja is a herb with antiviral activity, thought to be active against the Wart virus. Reapply 2 to 3 times per day.

Notes

Seek medical advice if a Wart is brown in colour.

Pharmacist's advice

Ask your Pharmacist for advice.

- 1) Follow the Diet Hints.
- 2) If the diet is inadequate consider some supplements.
- 3) Several **Wart paints** are available. Consult your Pharmacist for advice.

DISCLAIMER : This information is an educational aid only. It is not intended to replace medical advice for individual conditions or treatments. Talk to your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or naturopath before following any medical regimen to see whether it is safe and effective for you.