

Wart Treatment

Skin Warts

Common skin warts (also called cutaneous warts) are raised round or oval growths. A wart may be lighter or darker than the skin around it. Some warts may have tiny black dots in them, often called seeds. The dots are small, clotted blood vessels. Warts may occur alone or in larger groups that merge and form patches.

You can become infected with the virus that causes warts by touching another person's wart. The virus is more likely to infect skin that is injured or softened by water, but it can infect healthy skin as well. It can take up to six months after exposure to the virus for a wart to appear.

Who gets skin warts?

Skin warts are most common in children and young adults. People who have chronic skin conditions, such as eczema, many have more extensive warts or warts that are difficult to control.

Where do warts occur?

Skin Warts can occur in the following locations:

- Common skin warts, also call verruca vulgaris, can occur on any area skin, but are often seen on the fingers, hands knees, and elbows.
- When common warts are located around the fingernails, they are call periungual warts.
- Plantar warts are found on the soles of the feet.
- Flat warts are most commonly found on the back of the hands face, and lower legs.

Skin Wart Diagnosis:

Skin warts can usually be diagnosed based upon how they look. Skin biopsy or other testing is not usually necessary.

Skin Wart Treatment:

Treatment of warts depends upon where the wart is located and how much it bothers you. Treatment is not necessary in all cases because about two-thirds of skin warts will resolve on their own within two years, without treatment. However, during this time, the wart may enlarge or new warts may appear. In addition, a few small warts are usually easier to treat than multiple large warts. For reasons, most people choose to treat skin warts.

There are many ways to treat warts, and the "best" treatment depends upon you, your healthcare provider's preferences, and any underlying medical problems. **Most treatments take several weeks or even months to work and warts can come back after treatment.**

When to seek help- Consult your healthcare provider if:

- You are not sure if your skin growth is a wart
- Your skin wart does not improve with home treatment
- You would like to use home treatment, but are not sure which treatment is right for you.

- After treatment you develop signs of a skin infection, such as redness, pain, or pus –like drainage from the treated area. In some cases, redness and pain are normal reactions after wart treatment, so discuss possible side effects with your healthcare provider in advance.

Cost for wart treatment:

If you have questions regarding the cost of wart treatment, please call our business during office hours at 651 227 7806 Option # 3.

It is always best to call your insurance companies customer service line (list on the back of your insurance card) to discuss if your insurance coverage to discuss how these procedures are covered. PYAM uses the following codes for wart treatment 17110 and 17111.

The codes used for wart treatment are listed as surgical procedures for Destruction of lesions by means of cryosurgery and chemosurgery. 17110 are used for the treatment of 1-14 lesions and 17111 are for 15 or more lesions. This charge includes the provider's time and materials to render the procedure. An office visit will only be charged for if you are seeing the provider for other evaluations and management of care not related to the wart treatment. Because these codes are listed by the AMA Current Procedural Terminology under a surgical code, most insurance companies will apply the charges to your surgical benefit. It is the responsibility of the owners of the insurance policy to know their benefits.

Home Treatments

Salicylic Acid

Salicylic Acid is a type of acid that is applied directly to the warts. It comes in different forms, such as a liquid or patch. Some forms can be applied at home, while other must be applied by a healthcare provider.

Salicylic Acid is useful for most types of skin warts and can be used in children. You choose to combine salicylic acid treatment with duct tape. (See "Duct tape")

If you decide to try salicylic acid treatment at home, you should first soak the area in warm water for 10-20 minutes (to soften the skin) and dry the skin completely. Apply the liquid or patch to the wart at bedtime and leave it in place overnight. Between treatments, you should use a nail file or pumice stone too gently remove slough off the dead skin from the surface of the wart. It is normal to have some skin irritation or light bleeding during treatment: this is a sign that the treatment is working.

You should continue treatment for one to two weeks after the wart is gone to be sure that the virus is gone.

You should not use salicylic acid if you have neuropathy (nerve damage that causes numbness). In people with neuropathy, salicylic acid could potentially injure the skin without the person being aware of the injury.

Duct Tape

A sticky tape available at home improvement stores has been used to treat skin warts. It is not clear how duct tape works or if it is an effective treatment. Some studies have shown success while others have not.

If you choose to try duct tape, silver duct tape is preferred over clear tape because it sticks to the skin better. You should cover the skin wart with tape and leave in in place for six days. You then remove the tape, soak the skin in warm water for 10-20 minutes, and use an emery board, or pumice stone too gently remove slough off the dead skin. Leave the skin uncovered for one night, and then reapply the tape for another six nights.

Most people who find duct tape an effective treatment have resolution of their skin warts within four weeks. Warts are unlikely to respond if you do not see any improvement within two weeks.

Duct tape treatment is not recommended if you have diabetes, nerve damage (neuropathy), peripheral artery disease, or any condition that causes the skin to be irritated. In these people, duct tape may cause complications, such as skin sores or infection.

PYAM Prescription Treatment:

Nitrous Oxide (Histofreeze, CyrOmega)

Nitrous Oxide is a very cold liquid that destroys warts by freezing the skin (also called Cryotherapy). Nitrous Oxide must be applied by a healthcare provider, and **multiple treatments are often needed to eliminate the wart.**

Nitrous Oxide may be recommended for skin wart treatment in older children and adults, but it is not usually recommended for at least one week after the skin heals to reduce the chances of the wart coming back.

People with dark skin can develop permanent loss of skin color in areas treated with liquid nitrogen. If you have concerns about how your skin will appear after treatment with liquid nitrogen, talk to your healthcare provider.

Cantharidin (Beetle juice, Verrisol) **Please note this is not the same as Compound W.**

Cantharidin is a liquid that is applied by a healthcare provider to treat skin warts. It may be particularly useful for young children because it causes no pain initially. However, some people (although not all) develop pain, blisters, and swelling 2 to 24 hours after the treatment.

The skin usually heals within 5 to 10 days after treatment. Most providers recommend treatment with salicylic acid for at least one week after the skin heals to reduce the chances of the wart coming back.

Other treatments provided by Dermatologist:

Other wart treatments are available, and may be recommended if you do not respond to one of the treatments discussed above. These include immunomodulators, injections, and excision, done in a dermatology office. After discussing these treatments with your healthcare provider, a referral can be provided if needed by your insurance company to a provider based on your insurance plan.