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Verruca Vulgaris (Common Wart)

A wart, known scientifically as verruca vulgaris, is one of the most common skin diseases. About two out of three people have had warts and so carry the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), which is a large group of DNA viruses found in animals and people. There are at least 189 types of HPV, of which 120 types are recognized in humans. The myth that frogs cause warts is just that, a myth.



Treatment

No treatment is more than 70% effective, and warts can disappear spontaneously. This is the reason that home remedies, like rubbing a wart with a potato or with garlic, may work. Even crushing a vitamin C tablet has its fans, as does applying duct tape.

The important consideration in treatment is not to create a scar, which may last a lifetime, while the wart can disappear on its own.

Using cold is quite effective. Liquid nitrogen (-196°C), applied by the Cry-Ac®, works very nicely. Sometimes, electricity (Hyfercator®) can be used for small warts.

Other methods include applying salicylic acid (Compound W®) or catharidin (beetle juice) to cause a blister.

Cutting can be done as an alternative, but this does not guarantee that a wart will not be found at the site.



Development

The HPV virus is transmitted from person to person, but how is not known, as so many people have the virus. Like most viruses, the wart virus remains in the skin. When it becomes active, the skin is stimulated to overgrow; hence, the appearance of the wart. It is referred to as a common wart on the body; plantar wart on the sole; flat wart, if it is not elevated; and butcher's wart on the finger, etc.

A wart may develop in just a few days or smolder for many weeks. Generally, a wart, left untreated will remain for about two years, before it disappears.

