

# Viral Warts



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## What are warts?

- ➔ Warts are skin growths that occur when the cells present in the outermost layer of the skin is infected by the human papilloma virus (wart virus).
- ➔ Warts are common and harmless. They have a rough surface on which tiny, black dots can be seen, and can occur on any part of the body.
- ➔ Warts may bleed if injured.
- ➔ Warts are contagious. They may spread from one part of the body to other parts, or to other people. Therefore, it is important not to scratch the warts.
- ➔ Depending on the patient's immunity system, warts may disappear on their own, especially in children.
- ➔ Warts on the genitalia may be sexually acquired.



## Treatment of warts

- ➔ The treatment of warts involves destroying the outer layer of the skin where the wart grows.
- ➔ Treatment can be carried out at home by applying medications such as salicylic acid on the wart daily (usually at bedtime). Do not apply these medications to the surrounding healthy skin as it may irritate the skin. Stop the application for a few days if the wart becomes too painful, and resume treatment once the discomfort has eased.
- ➔ For adults and older children, cryotherapy (liquid nitrogen treatment) is another option. Please refer to the cryotherapy brochure for more information on this.

- ➔ For stubborn warts, electrosurgery (removing the wart with an electrical current) or laser surgery are occasionally used.
- ➔ Viral warts may develop again weeks to months after treatment. If this occurs, consult your doctor for further therapy.
- ➔ Liquid nitrogen (freezing) treatment is another common method to remove warts. Liquid nitrogen (a very cold liquid) is applied to the wart, which may harden and turn darker. While treatment can be uncomfortable and may result in blisters and scarring, repeat sessions at intervals of one to three weeks will be necessary until the warts clear up.



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