

Treatment (continued)

The paint/gel should be applied carefully to the wart not the normal surrounding skin.

If the wart becomes too sore, treatment should be stopped for a few days and then resumed.

Cryotherapy treatment (cold treatment) is also available to buy in chemists now.

If you have completed 12 weeks treatment with topical therapy or have used cryotherapy and are still having significant symptoms from the wart then please make an appointment with a GP.

Further Information

More information can be found at the British Association of Dermatologists at www.bad.org.uk

New Zealand also have a comprehensive website on skin diseases and management at dermnetnz.org.

You can also search on 'warts and verrucas' on the NHS Scotland health information site at www.nhsinform.scot

Plantar Warts (Verrucas)



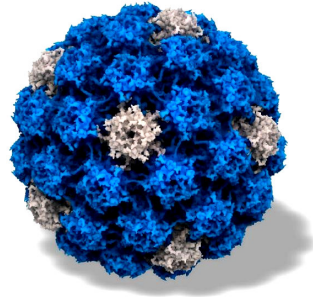
**a Bruntsfield Medical Practice
Patient Information Leaflet**

What are plantar warts?

Warts are localised thickenings of the skin and the term plantar warts is used for those that occur on the soles of the feet. They are also known as verrucas.

Warts are caused by a virus called the human papilloma virus and are caught by contact with infected skin scales usually from floors of changing rooms or swimming pools.

The virus is not highly contagious and it is unclear why some people develop the virus while others do not. The virus enters the skin through tiny breaks in the skin surface.



The warts can be anywhere on the soles of the feet or toes and often affect weight bearing areas. They can vary in size from 1mm to more than 1cm and may have a rough surface. Close inspection with a magnifying glass may reveal small black dots.

Children with verrucas can still go swimming but should wear verruca socks or waterproof plasters.



Treatment

There is no guaranteed cure but some treatments can help to clear warts. Most verrucas will clear in time and can be left untreated if not causing problems. When deciding whether to treat plantar warts or not the following should be taken into account:

- Warts usually resolve by themselves without leaving a scar or blemish.
- Successful treatment of a viral wart does not prevent further warts.
- Some warts can be very stubborn. Treatment does not always work and may be time consuming.
- Treating plantar warts can be painful especially with liquid nitrogen, and can leave a scar which on the sole can be very uncomfortable.

Most plantar warts can be managed with over the counter topical treatments such as salicylic acid paints and gels. Salicylic acid works by removing the outer dead layers of skin and triggering the immune system into clearing the virus.

Before applying the paint, the feet should be soaked in warm water and thickened skin filed away with a pumice stone or emery board.

Treatment should be daily for at least 12 weeks and is usually most convenient at bedtime.