

# WARTS, VENEREAL

(Condylomata Acuminata; Genital Warts; Moist Warts)

## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

Warts in the genital area (includes the urethra, genitals and rectum). These are more contagious than other warts. Some of the virus types that cause venereal warts are also associated with genital malignancies. They affect both sexes of sexually active adolescents and adults.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Venereal warts have the following characteristics:

- ~ They appear on moist surfaces, especially the penis, entrance to the vagina and entrance to the rectum.
- ~ They are thin, flexible, solid elevations of the skin, growing in stalks or clusters. They are taller than they are wide.
- ~ Each wart measures 1 mm to 2 mm in diameter, but clusters may be quite large.
- ~ They don't hurt or itch.

### CAUSES

Venereal warts are caused by a subtype of the same virus that causes other warts, human papillomavirus (HPV), but they are more contagious. They spread easily on the skin of the infected person and pass easily to other people. They are usually transmitted sexually, often as a result of poor hygiene. They have an incubation of 1 to 6 months.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- ~ Poor nutrition.
- ~ Other venereal disease.
- ~ Multiple sexual partners.
- ~ Crowded or unsanitary living conditions.
- ~ Poor hygiene.
- ~ Not using condoms.
- ~ In children, warts may be a sign of sexual abuse.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

To prevent spread of warts to other parts of the body or to other persons:

- ~ Don't scratch warts.
- ~ Avoid sexual activity until warts heal completely.
- ~ Use rubber condoms during sexual intercourse.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

These small warts usually cause no symptoms. If untreated, they probably will disappear eventually. However, because the virus may be associated with genital malignancy, obtain medical treatment. Recurrence is common.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- ~ Female cervical disorders, including cancer.
- ~ In males, urinary obstruction.

## TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- ~ Diagnostic tests may include biopsy of tissue, colposcopy, androscopy, anoscopy, and Pap smear.
- ~ Treatment will be determined by size and location of warts.
- ~ Small warts may be treated with topical applications.
- ~ For larger warts, application of liquid nitrogen to warts (cryotherapy).
- ~ Some larger warts require laser treatment, electrocoagulation or surgical excision.

### MEDICATIONS

Podophyllin, a topical medication may be prescribed. Apply it carefully to avoid damaging surrounding healthy tissue. Use petroleum jelly on surrounding tissue first. Don't apply to large areas at one time. Wash off after 4 hours. This may cause irritation or absorption of the drug. Keep podophyllin out of eyes.

### ACTIVITY

No restrictions, except to avoid sexual relations until warts are completely gone.

### DIET

No special diet.

## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- ~ You or a family member has symptoms of venereal warts.
- ~ The following occur after treatment:  
The treated area becomes infected (red, swollen, painful or tender).  
Fever.  
Feeling generally ill.

### Important Phone Numbers:

USI Student Health Center	465-1250
Monday - Friday 8a.m. - 4:30p.m.	
USI Wellness Center	464-1807
Deaconess Hospital	Emergency Dept. 426-3405

Adapted from Instructions for Patients, Sixth Edition, H. Winter Griffith, M.D., W.B Saunders Company.