

## WARTS

Warts are caused by a viral infection of the skin, causing thick rough hard spots. There are sometimes black dots visible in the wart. Plantar warts are simply warts on the sole of the foot. Warts are contagious and can spread on the individual or to others.

Warts resolve without treatment, usually after several years. Many people choose to treat or cover warts to prevent spreading or for cosmetic reasons, or because the wart causes pain. Do not allow the child to pick or bite the wart, as this may cause it to spread.

Treatment options include:

- Acid solutions used nightly at home to slowly kill the virus-infected cells
  - Available over the counter as liquids (duofilm or duoplant) or as patches
  - Take care not to treat surrounding normal skin with acid, as it may burn
  - The wart is softened by soaking or bathing at bedtime, and the acid is applied
  - The following night, the dead layer is removed by scraping (emery board, pumice stone, razor blade, etc) before soaking and applying acid again
  - This method works well but takes persistence for up to eight weeks. Certain areas, such as around nail beds, are more difficult to treat.
  
- Warts can be frozen, killing a larger number of virus-infected cells at once. For larger warts, several treatments may be necessary.
  - There is often discomfort involved in the freezing process
  - This method is quicker than the acid solutions and may be better for families that have trouble consistently using acid and scraping the wart.
  - Liquid nitrogen is used to freeze warts, leaving a blister. This is done by the dermatologist (or podiatrist if the wart is on the foot.)
  - Burning is rarely used to treat warts
  
- Duct tape over the wart for 24 hours a day for eight weeks may resolve the wart.
  
- Severe warts can be treated by laser; this is rarely necessary.
  
- Prescription medication options are available for stubborn warts.

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