

This leaflet details some more information about the treatment of warts. Please read it carefully.

What causes warts and verrucae?

Warts and verrucae are caused by a viral infection. They tend to occur mainly on the hands and feet but can occur on any parts of the skin. They are transmitted by prolonged contact.

Warts often disappear on their own without treatment though if they are painful then we would recommend one of the following methods.

Chemical treatments

There are a variety of chemical treatments (such as Bazucka, Occlusal, Salactol) available from the pharmacist. They should contain Salicylic acid (16-26%) and often form a 'skin' over the wart to stop them spreading.

To help the treatment to reach the virus any dead skin should be filed down with a pumice stone or foot file, and the paint/gel applied to the wart. Repeat this on a daily basis until the skin markings return to normal.

It may take 3 months for the wart to disappear in this way so do persist.

Cryotherapy

This method treats warts or verrucae by freezing. We would only recommend this if chemical treatment didn't resolve the problem and the warts are painful.

Liquid nitrogen is applied to the wart. This freezes the tissues rapidly to attempt to kill the virus. Often multiple applications are needed approximately 2-3 weeks apart (to allow the skin to recover before freezing again). It is important that dead skin is filed off in between treatments and we would encourage you to do this on a daily basis.

Are there any risks or problems with cryotherapy?

Problems are not common, but can include

- *Discomfort* – there may be some discomfort at the time of the treatment and this may persist for a day or two. Simple pain-killers like paracetamol are sufficient to relieve this if needed;
- *Blistering* – you may notice some redness, swelling or a small blister appear at the treatment site. Do not attempt to drain the blister. If it bursts, cover with a dry dressing and leave it to heal;
- *Failure* – some warts are so hardy that even cryotherapy does not work.

More questions?

Please get in touch with one of our nurses or doctors to discuss any other questions you may have about your wart or verrucae, or its treatment.