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Plantar Warts

Perhaps plantar warts are not such a pleasant topic, but they certainly are a common ailment. I tolerated a mosaic of plantar warts for more than two years before going to the podiatrist. With treatment, the warts cleared completely in five weeks. What is a plantar wart? A wart is an infection caused by a very common virus, which invades the skin through small cuts or breaks. Over time, the wart develops into a hard, irritating growth, typically on the bottom (plantar) of the foot. Warts appear spongy, with tiny red, brown, or black spots. Sometimes mistaken for corns or calluses, they can persist for years and recur in the same spots. Left untreated, warts can spread to other parts of the foot or body. Every wart has nerves and its own blood supply created by a root tapping into the circulatory system.



Treatment

Many people do not treat warts unless they are unsightly or painful. If you choose to treat your wart, home treatment is usually the first treatment tried. It includes:

Salicylic acid, a nonprescription medicine that softens the skin layers that form a wart so that they can be rubbed off.

It is available as a paint, cream, plaster, tape, or patch that you put on the wart. Salicylic acid may take weeks to months to cure a wart. Salicylic acid formulas include Compound W Wart Remover, Occlusal, and Salacid. Tape occlusion (duct tape). This treatment uses tape to cover the wart for a period of time. Nonprescription cryotherapy. Although cryotherapy can be performed in your doctor's office, a type of this treatment for common warts on the hands and feet can be done at home. You spray a combination of two chemicals into a foam applicator and then hold the applicator to the wart for a few seconds. This treatment should not be used for children younger than 4 or by pregnant or breast-feeding women. If you are uncertain that a skin growth is a wart, or if you have diabetes, peripheral arterial disease, or other major illnesses that may affect your treatment, it is best to see a doctor.

Treatment by your doctor

Cryotherapy is often used if home treatment is not successful. This procedure uses a very cold liquid to freeze a wart. Cryotherapy poses little risk of scarring, although it can be painful.