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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/genitalwarts.html>

Genital Warts

Also called: Condylomata acuminata, Venereal warts

What are genital warts?

Genital warts are a sexually transmitted infection (STI [<https://medlineplus.gov/sexuallytransmittedinfections.html>]) caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV [<https://medlineplus.gov/hpv.html>]). There are many types of HPV. Some types of HPV can cause genital warts. Other types of HPV can cause cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/cervicalcancer.html>] .

There is no treatment for HPV, but your health care provider can treat genital warts. HPV vaccines [<https://medlineplus.gov/vaccines.html>] may help prevent some of the HPV infections that cause genital warts.

Who is at risk for genital warts?

If you are sexually active, you can get genital warts during oral, vaginal, or anal sex with an infected partner. You can still get genital warts even if they are so small that you can't see them.

It doesn't happen often, but genital warts can also be spread from a woman to her baby during childbirth.

What are the symptoms of genital warts?

Genital warts are often painless and may not cause any symptoms. You might not even know that you have them. Sometimes, they can also cause itching, burning, bleeding, or discomfort.

The warts usually appear as a small bump or group of bumps in the genital area. They are flesh-colored and can be flat or look bumpy like cauliflower.

How are genital warts diagnosed?

Your provider can usually find out if you have genital warts by seeing them during a physical exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/healthcheckup.html>] or pelvic exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/womenshealthcheckup.html>] . In women, the warts usually occur in or around the vagina, on the cervix, or around the anus. Men may have warts on the tip of the penis, around the anus, or on the scrotum, thigh, or groin.

What are the treatments for genital warts?

The warts might disappear on their own, stay the same, or grow bigger or increase in number. A few ways that your provider can treat them include:

- Use medicines, cream, or ointment
- Remove them by burning, freezing, or cutting out the warts

HPV stays in your body even after treatment. This means that warts can come back, and you can still spread HPV to others after genital warts are removed.

Can genital warts be prevented?

Getting an HPV vaccine may help prevent genital warts. HPV vaccines provide the most protection if you get them before exposure to the virus. This means that it's best to get vaccinated before becoming sexually active. If you're over age 26 and haven't been vaccinated, talk with your provider about the possible benefits of vaccination.

Correct usage of latex condoms greatly reduces, but does not eliminate, the risk of catching or spreading HPV. If you or your partner is allergic to latex [<https://medlineplus.gov/latexallergy.html>] , you can use polyurethane condoms. The best way to avoid infection is not to have anal, vaginal, or oral sex.

Dept. of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health

Start Here

- Genital Warts [<https://womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/genital-warts>]
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/genital-warts>]
- Genital Warts [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/genital-warts/symptoms-causes/syc-20355234?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/genital-warts/symptoms-causes/syc-20355234?p=1>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- HPV Vaccination [<https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/vaccines/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- HPV Vaccine [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/hpv-vaccine.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/hpv-vaccine.html>]


Images

- Genital Wart (Condyloma Acuminatum) [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/condyloma-acuminatum-genital-wart/?Imiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Test Your Knowledge

- HPV and Genital Warts Quiz [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/quiz/000886_41.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/quiz/000886_96.htm]

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Condylomata Acuminata [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Condylomata+Acuminata%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Correlation between Acetowhite Examination, Dermoscopy, and Histopathology in Patients with Anogenital... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40636952>]
- Article: Impact of HPV vaccination on the hospitalizations for anogenital warts and... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40518563>]
- Article: Evaluation of the Efficacy of Active Hexose Correlated Compound as an... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40282913>]
- Genital Warts -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Condylomata+Acuminata%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/>] 

Teenagers

- Genital Warts (HPV) (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/genital-warts.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/genital-warts.html>]
- Genital Warts (HPV) (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/std-warts.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/std-warts.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Condom Use: An Overview [<https://www.cdc.gov/condom-use/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Genital warts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000886.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000886.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Genital warts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000886.htm>]

Related Health Topics

- HPV [<https://medlineplus.gov/hpv.html>]
- Sexually Transmitted Infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/sexuallytransmittedinfections.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Genital Warts* is the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/>]

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