

Warts in Kids

Nearly fifty percent of children acquire warts at some time or the other. Warts, in the real sense are benign tumors which develop when keratinocytes, a kind of skin cell, is infected by the wart virus. There are many types of warts, the most common being rough bumps which appear on fingers and hands. Others are flat warts, genital warts, plantar warts, and molluscum contagiosum. The difference is based on the types, location, and painfulness of the wart. Common warts appear on fingers and hands and usually are painless. Plantar warts appear on the soles and are sometimes painful. Periungal warts show up around the finger and toe nail. Warts which appear on the face are flat warts.

The symptoms of the common warts are that the skin develops an irregular surface and becomes rough. A dome starts to appear after a day after infection. A popular myth is that warts have roots, but they don't. They grow on the epidermis, which is the top most layer of the skin. The black portion is because of broken veins and clotted blood.

Warts come and go at various stages of life like childhood and teenage years. They usually go away by themselves. But some can be very painful, can spread quickly and some of them won't go away for many years. Such kind of warts should definitely be treated. The most common treatment among the pediatricians is cryotherapy. They will freeze the warts using liquid nitrogen. Cantharidin can also be applied, which is a painless treatment but can result in painful blisters at the end of the day. The minus point is that these treatments sometimes cause blistering and some warts won't come off in one sitting. If the warts won't still budge they are further treated with strong salicylic acid, intralesional immune-therapy, bleomycin, or a pulsed dye laser. Aldara can also be used in worst cases. Because of some treatments the warts grow to the end of the blister, which results in a bigger wart and some might even result in a scar.

Besides other common wart treatments, the most well-known home remedy is duct tape. The affected area is covered with duct tape for about six days. If within that time period, the tape peels off, it should be reapplied. After the sixth day, the duct tape should be removed and the wart should be soaked in water and a pumice stone or emery board should be used to scrap the top skin of the wart. After this, the duct tape should be reapplied again within twenty four hours and the same procedure should be repeated until the whole wart disappears. This procedure takes at least two months to get rid of the wart completely. Some kids hesitate to put duct tape on parts which are visible, like fingers and legs. They can be encouraged by making them wear colored duct tape, other than grey. Many home wart freezing and removal kits are also available in the market whose

help can be taken.

Warts spread by direct contact with the wart or any material which the infected person has used like a used towel which has been contaminated. It is contagious and hence it is recommended to stay away from it at the very sight of it. All the cuts, rashes and bites should be cleaned regularly and should be kept covered. Another measure for prevention is wearing closed shoes in public places.

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