



Wart Treatment (Verruca)

Warts are caused by a skin virus called verruca. Some people are more susceptible than others to this virus. There are many different strains of the virus.

Most warts will go away on their own eventually. This may take a number of years, however.

One of the most effective treatments for plantar warts is application of Cantharone or Cantheradin. This is a chemical extracted from a family of beetles called Blister Beetles. The chemical causes a separation of the outer layers of the skin from the deeper layers.

Cantharone is applied to the affected area and tape is placed over this. You should leave the tape intact for about 36 hours. During this time, the chemical will act to lift the top layers of the skin along with some of the wart tissue. This may result in minor to severe discomfort. This depends on the person. Some people are more sensitive and have an almost allergic reaction. It is not possible to predict what kind of reaction you will have. If the pain is severe, the tape may be removed early and you should take ibuprofen as long as this does not cause problems for you.

About a week or two after application, the lifted skin should be trimmed off and the Cantharone re-applied if necessary. Often, it takes several applications to remove all the infected tissue.

A less painful way of treating warts is the application of salicylic acid. This comes in a variety of over-the-counter forms. Some of the more common are Compound W, DuoPlant, and DuoFilm. The best way to apply this is to trim down the wart with a callous shaver and then apply the medicine with tape over this. Duct tape works well. This may take several months to work.

Liquid nitrogen (cryotherapy) seems to work best for “young” warts (warts that have just appeared and are still very small). Dr. Lowinger does not use this treatment.

In some cases, surgical removal is necessary. This involves cutting out of the wart and surrounding skin and burning the base of the lesion. This results in an open wound and longer recovery time.