

## Parkbury House Wart and Verruca Information

Warts can occur at any site but are common on the hands. Verruca is the name for a viral wart on the sole of the foot. They are a common childhood problem but also occur in adults. As the term viral wart implies they are caused by a virus and in children and most adults they are a self-limiting problem. This means that they get better on their own but this can take many months or sometimes even years. They are not dangerous to health and can be considered a normal childhood infection, just like catching chicken pox.

Warts and verrucas normally are easy to identify - see the pictures below.



Some patients or parents want an appointment for themselves or their child so the doctor can confirm that the lesion is a verruca. This is not usually necessary, certainly in children. If you are in doubt then please send a photograph of the suspected verruca to us at:

[parkburyhouse.info@nhs.net](mailto:parkburyhouse.info@nhs.net)

Please give your email the title 'Verruca Confirmation'. A doctor will look at the image and we will send you a return email within a week or two.

## Treatment

Nobody likes having a verruca and patients and parents are usually very keen to get rid of them. However, unfortunately, no treatment is particularly effective. Warts just go away when they want to.

As they are self-limiting, not treating is a definite option. Often verrucas are asymptomatic - this means they do not cause any particular symptoms and just leaving them alone to get better naturally can be a very good thing to do. Sometimes it is only when you start treating a wart that they become painful or troublesome.

However if a verruca is painful, often because the skin around becomes thickened and they are painful to walk on, then there are treatments you can try. Using a pumice stone or other foot file regularly can prevent the build-up of hard skin and can keep the verruca comfortable. Wart paints are available over the counter – please discuss with your pharmacist. There are 2 main types:

- Salicylic acid paints e.g. Bazuka, Salatac or Salactol can be effective and can be used in children over 2 years of age. The product needs to be applied just to the verruca at bedtime after filing down. You need to do this for 3 months before you can consider that this treatment has failed.

<https://www.bazuka.co.uk/treat/gel>

- Wartner pen (a trichloroacetic acid preparation) is also available for use in children over 4 years old. This is used twice daily in pulses of 4 days followed by a 4 day break and the treatment can be repeated up to 4 times.

<https://www.wartner.eu/warts-verruucas/frequently-asked-questions/about-wartner-wart-pen/>

Patients often ask for liquid nitrogen (freezing) treatment. It is important to understand that this is no more effective than wart paint and is painful. Because of the pain it is not suitable for use in children. We will only offer this treatment for warts and verrucas in exceptional circumstances. It is possible to buy home freezing kits. Most patients do not find these very effective as the temperature achieved is not low enough so in summary if you wish to treat; wart paint is the best option.

Please have a look at the links below for further information.

From NHS Choices:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/warts-and-verruucas/>

From patient.co.uk:

<https://patient.info/skin-conditions/warts-and-verruucas-leaflet>

What about swimming? Here is advice from the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association)

<https://www.britishswimming.org/members-resources/athletes-and-parents/understanding- verrucas/>

If after reading all this advice you would still like to see a doctor then please book a routine telephone consultation or a routine appointment. You may have to wait a few days for this but warts and verrucas are not an urgent problem and we cannot deal with calls about them on our triage system.

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ADULTS** - if you have a growing or changing skin lesion on your foot, particularly one which is pigmented or bleeding then you will need to show this to a doctor. This is unlikely to be a verruca.