



WHAT IS PODIATRY?

Committed to the health of your feet, podiatric medicine focuses on diagnosing, treating, and preventing foot and ankle problems, such as warts. Your podiatrist (doctor of podiatric medicine) is highly trained through years of study and clinical practice, including a bachelor's degree program and four years of podiatric medical school. Podiatrists may also have from one to three years of residency training, studying other aspects of foot care and surgery. Podiatrists continue to stay informed about the latest research and developments in the field.

In treating your feet, your podiatrist may also work with your other healthcare providers to give you appropriate and comprehensive care.

F o o t n o t e

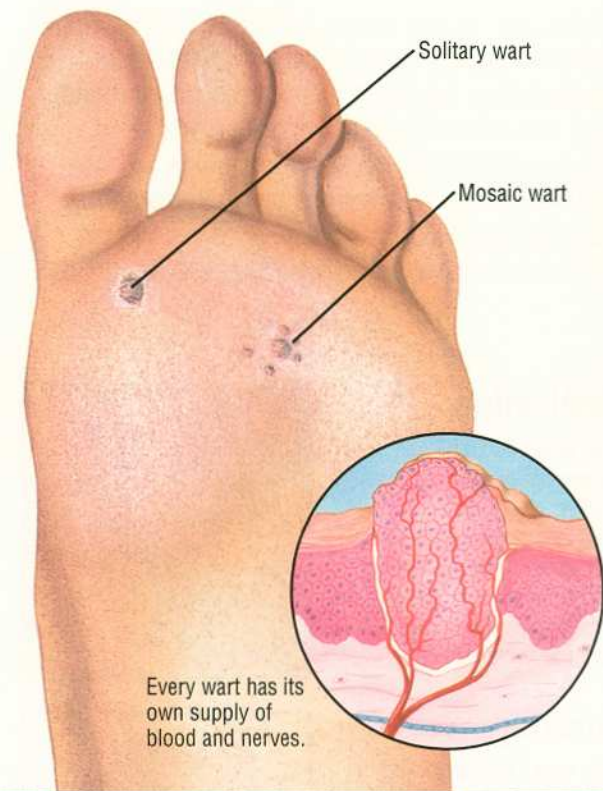
Warts are seen most often in children, teenagers, and young adults.

WHAT ARE WARTS?

A wart is an infection caused by a virus, which can invade your skin through small cuts or breaks. Over time, the wart develops into a hard, rough growth on the surface of the skin. A wart is most commonly seen on the bottom of the foot (plantar wart), but can also appear on the top. Children, teens, and people with allergies or weakened immune systems are more vulnerable to the wart virus.

Symptoms

Warts may appear spongy, with tiny red, brown, or black spots. They can grow up to an inch or more across, occurring alone (solitary) or with smaller warts clustered nearby (mosaic). Warts are sometimes mistaken for corns or calluses. They can persist for years and recur in the same spot. If left untreated, warts can spread to other parts of the foot or even to the hands or other areas of the body.



Evaluation

Your podiatrist examines your wart carefully to determine that it is not a corn or a callus. A wart will usually feel painful when your podiatrist squeezes it from side to side. To examine the wart further, the hard skin layer around it may need to be trimmed. A wart will have certain spots that bleed when trimmed; a callus will not.

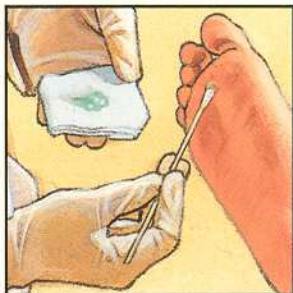


HOW DOES MY PODIATRIST TREAT WARTS?

There are many ways to treat warts, depending on their size and location. Medication or surgical removal, or both, may be effective treatments. A few of the possible treatment methods are described below; freezing or burning may also be used to treat warts. Even after warts are removed, they may recur.

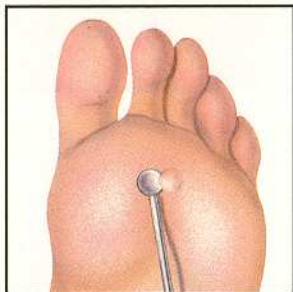
Medication

The wart is broken down by applying an acidic medication. Blister-forming medication may also be used. Treatment may need to be repeated over several weeks.



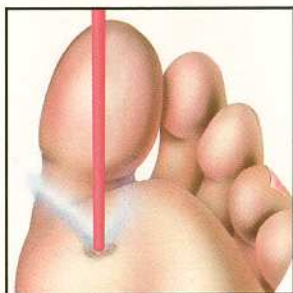
Curettage

The wart is removed with a small, spoon-shaped instrument (curette). To lessen pain, a local anesthetic is often used with this procedure.



Laser

The wart is vaporized, using focused light energy produced by a laser. To lessen pain, a local anesthetic is often used with this procedure.



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT WARTS?

After your podiatrist treats your warts, protect your feet from future infection by keeping them clean and dry. If you're thinking of using over-the-counter medications for warts, ask your podiatrist first. Some of these treatments can damage skin—and may be dangerous if you have diabetes or poor circulation.



Avoid going barefoot in public places like showers, gyms, and locker rooms. The wart virus may spread easily in moist settings like these. Wear thongs or sandals on your feet.

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PODIATRIC CARE

WARTS

