

WARTS

Plantar warts are small, rough, round growths that are medically known as *verrucae* and occur on the hands and feet. They're caused by a virus called the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and are often contracted in childhood. Once you've contracted the virus, you'll always have it in your system, so plantar warts may spontaneously recur throughout your lifetime.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF WARTS?

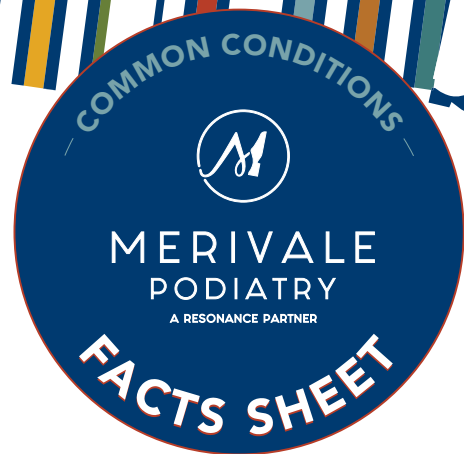
Plantar warts are relatively small and often have a rounded but grainy appearance. You may develop one wart or many at the same time. Other signs include:

- Small black pinpoint dots (clotted blood vessels)
- Bumps on the surface of the warts
- The lines of the skin of the foot go through the wart, not around the wart like with corns
- Callus may cover the wart if it's in a weight bearing area
- Pain on pinching the wart from the sides
- Pain when walking if it is on a weight bearing area, otherwise it may be barely noticeable

WHAT CAUSES PLANTAR WARTS?

The HPV virus is the cause of plantar warts and is spread through direct contact. If you have a break in the skin, like a small cut or graze, then you may contract the virus through sharing the same surface (like a shower or a floor) with someone who has the virus. Once you contract the virus, it may take months for the wart to develop.

Immune systems do respond differently and not everyone that comes in contact with the virus will develop plantar warts. Similarly, a weakened immune system may make you more susceptible.



MANAGING PLANTAR WARTS AT HOME

If your wart is not causing you any pain or discomfort, you may not wish to treat it. Warts can resolve on their own, though sometimes this can take years.

Over the counter wart pads are available from the pharmacy, however, we cannot recommend using these as they contain an acid that does not differentiate between healthy tissue and wart tissue. This means that it can cause a chemical burn to the healthy skin surrounding the wart.

To minimise the risk of spreading the infection (both to other people and to other areas of your body), you can:

- Avoid walking barefoot, except on sandy beaches
- Change your shoes and socks daily
- Keep your feet clean and dry

If you have a systemic condition like diabetes, you should definitely avoid using these pads and see your podiatrist for treatment, guidance and best long-term outcomes. This is because diabetes puts you at risk for complications and problems with healing.

When managing plantar warts, it is important that you ensure that you have an accurate diagnosis, as corns and warts share many similar features and can be mistaken for one another. This is where your podiatrist can confirm the diagnosis so that appropriate treatment can be implemented.

Disclaimer: This document is an informative guide only and is not a tool for diagnosis or management. We strongly recommend that you see your podiatrist for their professional opinion, accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.



WHEN TO SEE A PODIATRIST AND HOW THEY CAN HELP

As plantar warts are a virus, they can be difficult to treat and can recur spontaneously. Your podiatrist will discuss with you the suitable treatment options for you based on your medical history. Treatments can include:

- Topical chemicals and medications such as salicylic acid
- Silver nitrate
- Dry needling
- Cryotherapy, or freezing the warts off
- Heat therapy, or burning the warts off
- Surgery to remove the wart

Recent medical research shows that a course of treatment with Upton's Paste is the most effective solution for warts. We offer treatment plans that use Upton's Paste and you can buy it from our [online shop](#). However, everyone is different; your podiatrist will work with you to determine the best treatment plan for you.

Need an appointment? Got questions about podiatry? [Click here.](#)

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