

Footwear

Choosing well-fitting footwear will help to prevent your foot slipping about and causing rubbing or squashing on the verruca which can make it painful.

If the verruca is under the foot, a thicker cushion-soled shoe should be worn as a hard thin sole may not provide enough cushioning to protect the area. A cushioning insole may help. Trainers are good but avoid slip on shoes of any type.

Shoes should be long enough and deep enough for the foot so that they are not pressing on the foot and adding more pressure to the site of the verruca. They should fasten with a strap, lace or velcro fastening to prevent the shoe slipping and causing the verruca to be painful.

Further Help and Information

For persistent problems you should speak to your doctor or health visitor who can advise you. In extreme cases, which are very uncommon, they may wish to refer you to see a specialist.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this leaflet, please contact Podiatry Services.

Further information about the service and how to manage a range of foot health problems yourself, can also be found on our website: www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry

Contact Details

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Podiatry Services Patient Information Leaflet



Verrucae

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Advice for the simple care of verrucae

What is a Verruca?

A verruca is the same as a wart and the name simply describes a wart on the foot. Warts are extremely common and having them can almost be considered a normal part of growing up.

Warts are small rough growths (of 1 mm to over 1 cm in diameter) which are caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV). They can appear anywhere on the skin but are most commonly seen on the hands and feet. Most people will have them at some point in their life, mostly likely in childhood but adults may also develop them.

Plantar warts (verruca) grow on the soles of the feet; they often have black dots in the center and may be painful. Mosaic warts occur when a number of plantar warts in one area merge together into a larger one making what is called a plaque.

Are Verrucae Harmful?

No, verrucae are not harmful and they do not cause symptoms such as pain unless over a bony site on the foot.

The majority of verruca do not require treatment. In healthy individuals the body builds up its own immunity to the virus which causes a verruca. This means that it is not necessary to treat a verruca with any chemical or physical therapy which can sometimes also damage the skin. Treatments often make the verruca more painful than they naturally are.

A verruca may take several months to go away but usually resolve spontaneously within 2 years.

Wet moist conditions and broken skin help spread the viral infection.

Are Verrucae Infectious?

Warts are contagious, but the risk of transmission is thought to be low. To reduce the risk of passing on verrucae to others, try following these points:

Cover the wart with a waterproof plaster when swimming
Wear flip-flops in communal showers
Avoid sharing shoes, socks, or towels

Can I Still Go Swimming and Do Sports?

Yes you can. There is no reason for you to avoid activities such as sports and swimming, but you should follow the advice given above to reduce the chance of passing the virus to others. This is particularly the case for any barefoot sports.

What Can I Do To Avoid Problems with My Verruca?

You can reduce the possibility of spreading verrucae to other people and help to avoid problems with your verruca by:

- Leaving the verruca alone - the body's natural defences can get rid of the virus
- Do not remove, pick or pull away any part of the skin
- Do not file the verruca
- Wash your hands after touching a verruca
- Avoiding biting nails or sucking fingers that have warts
- Keeping feet dry and changing socks every day

If the verruca becomes tender protect the area with a sticky tape such as a zinc oxide tape or leukotape which can be bought at your local chemist / pharmacy or online.