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## **What are they?**

Warts are an overgrowth of skin caused by a virus. They can be spread from person to person or from one area of your skin to another.

## **How do I get rid of them?**

Although warts usually go away eventually without any treatment, there are ways to more quickly get rid of them.

- 1) First you should avoid scratching or biting them as this can spread the virus to other parts of your skin.
- 2) You can try nonprescription products that contain salicylic acid (e.g., Wart-Off, Oclusal). First soak the area in hot water for about 10-15 minutes. Then use an Emery board or pumice stone to file down the surface of the wart until it begins to hurt or bleed. Finally apply the wart medicine directly over the wart, taking care to avoid getting it on the normal surrounding skin. Repeat this same process once daily until the wart gets too irritated to continue. If the wart starts coming back as the area heals, start the process over.
- 3) You can cautiously try over-the-counter freezing treatments.
- 4) If these treatment fails, there are other ways of treating warts including topical creams (e.g., 5% 5-fluorouracil), cantharidin compound (blister-beetle extract), liquid nitrogen freezing, electrical destruction, chemical injection and laser treatments. We nearly always achieve success with bleomycin injections when other treatments have failed. However, caution needs to be taken when injecting warts on digits and near the cuticle.

## **Once they go away, will they ever come back?**

Once cleared warts usually don't come back, because your body develops immunity against them. However, some people will get warts again.

