Sharp Podiatric
MEDICINE + SURGERY
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WART PROTOCOL

Warts are tricky and difficult especially if they have been present for an extended period of time or if the distribution on the foot is large. The skin on the bottom of the foot is especially thick which makes it hard to remove the warty material. The wart virus is ubiquitous in the environment and humans are normally infected through trauma of the skin whereby a small fissure allows the virus to migrate through the deeper layers and become embedded into the DNA of the host (human) cell, usually on the bottom of the foot. Once this occurs, the virus essentially high jacks the cell and causes it to grow more quickly under its direction instead of the normal human DNA. It also causes the blood vessels to grow towards the wart so that it has more nutrition. These blood vessels are commonly referred to as a "seeds".

Is normally takes 6-8 weeks in order to chemically cauterize and eliminate the wart. To remove the DNA out of the cells, the entire area of skin has to be sacrificed, but will grow back normally as long as the virus is dead. Therefore we normally coordinate utilizing 3 topical medications over the course of 6 or 8 weeks to slowly kill the tissue.

This includes Canthridid, Efudex, and 70% salicylic acid. The first is a version of the old-fashioned beetle juice which creates a immune reaction whereby the white blood cells kill the tissue targeted by the canthridid. This medication is very strong and can create pain as a blister develops over the course of 2-3 days following application. The longer the medication is left in place the more effective that it is and the more pain that may develop. We normally recommend utilization of this medication for only 4-6 hours on the first application. This medication is generally applied every 2 weeks during the follow-up visit in the office. This medication is only utilized in the office and may not be taken home.

Efudex is a chemotherapy cream that is relatively weak by itself due to the thickness of the skin. It has very minimal systemic affect above the level where it is absorbed, but it may it more difficult for the wart to replicate. Efudex is used each morning in a wide distribution around the wart tissue. It is commercially available through prescription and will be utilized for the entire treatment protocol and an additionally 2 weeks following resolution of the wart.

Lastly 70% salicylic acid is the mainstay of treatment and used each night before bed with use of a Band-Aid. Its job is to dissolve skin. This medication is made by the compounding pharmacy and not available at traditional pharmacies. We recommend picking up this medication up at the Sky Ridge pharmacy on the first floor of the Aspen building. It is applied over the wart in a thin layer which should extend several millimeters beyond the normal wart.

Exfoliation and debridement of the buildup of dead, macerated, cauterized, white unhealthy, dead skin is imperative to the success of treatment. We recommend utilization of a pumice stone or emery board especially while the skin is wet and moist. This should be done at least once daily. Please remember that the wart originates from the very deep layers of skin.