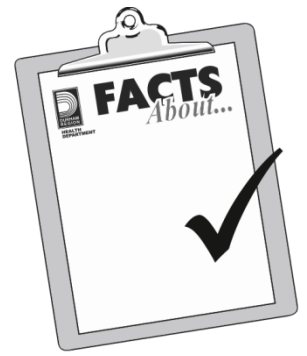




FACTS

About...



HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Genital Warts

What is it?

Genital warts are caused by a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV). They look like common skin warts, and may appear on the vagina, cervix, around the anus and on the penis.

How is it spread?

Genital warts are spread by direct contact, usually sexual, with a person who has them. People who have warts on their hands may spread the virus to other parts of their body.

What do I look for?

Genital warts usually appear two weeks to eight months after contact. Symptoms vary depending upon the number of warts and their location. Patients with a small number of warts are often asymptomatic. Other patients may have itching, bleeding, burning, tenderness, vaginal discharge, or pain. During pregnancy, warts can increase in size and number. This may cause problems when the baby is born. Certain types of HPV can cause cell changes to the cervix. These changes can progress to cancer of the cervix. Routine pap testing is recommended for all sexually active women.

How is it treated?

Keep the infected area dry. Wear only cotton underwear. Avoid synthetic materials such as nylon. Your doctor can use a number of treatments such as skin medications, freezing and laser therapy. Certain skin medications to treat genital warts should not be used during pregnancy. All sexual partner(s) should be examined and treated if necessary. Even after treatment, there is a potential for warts to recur. Genital warts are usually harmless, but they can be stubborn to treat.

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For more information

Durham Region Health Department

905-668-2020 1-800-841-2729 durham.ca

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



How can I protect myself?

- Practice safe sex and always use a condom with lubricant (condoms cannot protect 100% from warts, but they help reduce the risk of transmission and provide protection against other sexually transmitted infections)
- If you are a woman and sexually active, have regular pap testing
- Avoid sexual contact while the warts are present
- Finish the treatment your doctor prescribes
- Return for follow-up visits as your doctor asks
- Tell your partner(s) so they can be examined and treated if necessary
- Have warts on other parts of your body, especially your fingers, treated by your doctor

October 30, 2015

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