

WARTS AND HOMOEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT-A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT:

Warts is a common skin condition having rough excrescence on the skin. ⁽¹⁾ There are over 90 subtypes, causing different clinical presentations. ⁽²⁾ It is common in young adults. ⁽¹⁾ Any stasis of disease or miasmatic suppression may produce an abnormal growth. ⁽³⁾ Homoeopathy has a wide scope in treatment of warts. Warts are classified under one sided disease as external local maladies. They have individualistic and familial tendencies. ⁽⁴⁾ The review aims to see the scope of homoeopathy in the treatment of warts.

KEYWORDS: Warts, Homoeopathy, Abnormal growth, Human papilloma virus.

INTRODUCTI

Warts are extremely common skin growths that are caused by Human Papilloma Virus. Most people suffer from one or more at some point of time during their life. ⁽⁵⁾ Common warts have been a frustration for both patients and clinicians since early Greek and roman times. It can greatly affect a patient's quality of life by casing embarrassment and frustration caused by persistence or recurrence. ⁽⁶⁾ There is common benign epithelial hyperplasia due to infection with Human Papilloma Viruses (HPV). They infect squamous epithelia of the skin and mucous membrane causing self proliferation. ⁽⁷⁾ Warts occur when skin cells grow faster than normal because they are infected with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Among the 150 strains of HPV, about 10 cause cutaneous (skin) warts, including common, plantar, and flat warts. Certain other strains cause anal warts and genital warts. ⁽⁸⁾ It can take a wart as long as 2-6 months to develop after your skin has been exposed to the virus. ⁽⁹⁾ It is known that nearly 2/3rd of warts spontaneously disappear within 24 months. The only negative observation is that there is a risk that wart can enlarge and even spread to other areas. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Warts are easily transmitted by direct or indirect contact, especially if there is the disruption of the normal epithelial barrier. Besides the skin, warts can also occur on mucous membranes. ⁽¹¹⁾ Skin warts are widespread skin complications which can occur to anybody at any age. There is a high chance of recurrence of warts after the conventional treatment. Homoeopathy treats the cause of the affection. ⁽¹⁰⁾

EPIDEMIOLOGY:

Warts is the 3rd common skin disease worldwide and affect approximately 10% of the population. In school-aged children, the prevalence is as high as 10% to 20%. They are more common among immunosuppressed patients and meat handlers. ⁽¹¹⁾ Warts can occur at any age. Although rare in infancy and early childhood, prevalence increases among school-aged children and peaks at 12 to 16 years. ⁽¹¹⁾ According to male-to-female ratio surveys. Males are nearly twice the number of females due to increased outdoor activity. ⁽¹²⁾

MODES OF TRANSMISSION:

Infection of a host requires direct contact with viral particles, which can occur through either direct contact via a plantar wart or indirect contact via fomites, such as flooring, socks, shoes, towels, and sports equipment. There is no systemic dissemination or viremic phase to HPV infection. ⁽¹³⁾

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY:

HPV replicates in the epidermal cells, of the skin. Which consists of Skin epidermis is the thin layer of the skin. It consists of 3 types of cells; Squamous cells, Basal cells, Melanocytes. ⁽³⁴⁾ Human Papilloma Virus causes irregular thickening of the stratum corneum of the squamous cells in the infected areas people who lack virus- specific immunity are susceptible. ⁽¹⁵⁾ After exposure to the virus, HPV attacks the epidermal layers of damaged, cracked skin. Unlike viral wart lesions elsewhere on the body, plantar warts grow deep into the tissue secondary to the constant pressure application to the sole of the foot. ⁽¹⁷⁾ Abnormal proliferation of cells of the epidermis, the over production of cells is caused by viral infection. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Caused by Human Papilloma Virus various warts subtypes have tendency to be site-specific; viral replication in differtiated epithelial cells in upper epidermis. ⁽¹⁶⁾

CLINICAL MANIFESTATION:

The clinical presentation of warts is classified based on the site and character of appearance.

TYPES:

1. **Verruca plana or juvenile warts** - are seen in children usually on the back of the hands or on face. They are smooth, small, flat topped papules of skin colour. ⁽¹⁴⁾ They are flat or slightly elevated. ⁽¹⁵⁾

2. **Verruca vulgaris** - These affect any part of the body especially the hands and feet, varying in size from pinhead to pea size. The surface is rough and hyperkeratotic. They are firm in consistency and not tender.⁽¹⁴⁾ It is a common variant with hard papules, with a rough, irregular, scaly surface, most commonly seen on hands.⁽¹⁶⁾
3. **Filiform warts**-These are finger-like growths, slender and thin found on the face and neck.⁽¹⁴⁾ It also seen on eyelids around the lips or nares.⁽¹⁶⁾
4. **Plantar and palmar warts**-These occur on the palms and soles of the feet. They are flat due to pressure, but are deep in the skin. They are painful and tender, occur on sites of pressure like the balls of feet and heels. Often a number of these warts conglomerate to form a mosaic wart. Clinically, it must be differentiated from a corn which also occurs on pressure points, tender at the center, but has no papillomatous surface when scraped. The normal lines of the skin stop at the margins of a wart. When the surface is gently scraped, small bleeding points or black dots are seen.⁽¹⁴⁾
5. **Genital warts** (Condylomata acuminata) – commonly seen in - Sexually active adults of either sex.

COMPLICATIONS:

Impairment of the immune system, especially cell-mediated immunity, usually results in prolonged duration of warts. When immune function is severely impaired, for example after organ or bone marrow transplant or due to severe combined immune deficiency, warts may be large, extensive and resistant to treatment. Warts may be the presenting feature of milder immunosuppressed states such as lymphoma, idiopathic CD4 lymphocytopenia or HIV infection, so unusually severe or prolonged warts should prompt consideration of underlying immune deficit.⁽¹⁹⁾ Out of the 100 subtypes of HPV, a few of them have the propensity to induce cancer. Warts, in general, are benign, but there are reports that sometimes they may become malignant and develop into what is known as verrucous carcinoma. The verrucous carcinoma is a slow growing tumor and is classified as a well differentiated squamous cell malignancy that is often mistaken for a common wart.⁽¹¹⁾

DIAGNOSIS:

Diagnosis of common hand and foot warts is usually not difficult. Paring down a wart will often result in pinpoint bleeding as the capillary loops of the elongated dermal papillae are exposed. Warts need to be distinguished either clinically or histologically from other keratotic lesions on the hands or feet, such as actinic keratoses, knuckle pads or, more rarely, squamous cell carcinoma or focal palmoplantar keratoderma. On the feet, corns and calluses or callosities can be confused with warts⁽¹⁹⁾

Diagnosis of warts is based on clinical appearance; biopsy is rarely needed. A cardinal sign of warts is the absence of skin lines crossing their surface and the presence of pinpoint black dots (thrombosed capillaries) or bleeding when warts are shaved.⁽³³⁾

GENERAL MANAGEMENT:

The patient should be educated on preventing trauma and transmission. The patient should be told to avoid nail-biting, wear proper shoe, [avoid wearing tight fitting shoes]and wear gloves when working with meat products or avoid working with meat products.⁽¹¹⁾ **HOMOEOPATHIC THERAPUTICS FOR WARTS:**

- Homoeopathy is a branch of medical therapeutics based on the principle “Similia Similibus Curentur”, which means “Like Cures Like”
- In homoeopathy, the remedy differs from person to person, because “Homoeopathy treats the man in disease, not the disease in man”.
- The theory of miasms originates in Hahnemann’s book The Chronic Diseases published in 1828. The 3 miasms; Psora, Syphilis, Sycosis, given in the work are held to be responsible for all disease of chronic nature.⁽²⁰⁾
- Warts come under the miasm-sycosis also known as fig wart miasm. The infection through coition, more rarely they appear dry and like warts, more frequently soft, spongy, emitting a specifically fetid fluid, bleeding easily, and in the form of a coxcomb or a cauliflower.⁽²¹⁾
- In latent psora miasm, the warts occur on the face, the lower arm, the hands, etc. [especially in youth]. Many remain only a short time and pass away to give place to another symptoms of psora.⁽²¹⁾
- These warty growths on close study will show that specific nature, that persistence of character, that stubbornness so characteristic of the sycotic element.⁽²²⁾
- When using homoeopathy for warts, good results are achieved when the remedy corresponds to the characteristic of the person as well as the shape and appearance of the wart.
- The remedy is prescribed by taking the totality of the patient in comparison with similar symptoms produced by the drug.

The commonly used homoeopathic therapeutics are;

- **ANTIMONIUM CRUDUM:**
Disposition to abnormal growths of skin.⁽²⁴⁾ Warts grow upon the hands.⁽²⁵⁾ Hard, horny excrescences grow under the nail and are extremely painful.⁽²⁵⁾ The great key for the use of this drug is a thick, milky white coat on the tongue, from slow digestion.⁽²⁶⁾
- **CALCAREA CARBONICA:**
Warts on the face and hands.⁽²⁷⁾ Round, Hard, solitary warts. Indicated in people with clammy hands and feet.⁽²³⁾ Apprehensive worse towards the evening forgetful, averse to work or exertion.⁽²⁷⁾

- **CAUSTICUM:**

Warts: - Large, Jagged, often pedunculated; bleeding easily; exuding moisture; small, all over the body; on eyelids, face; on the nose.⁽²⁴⁾ Warts also with pain and inflammation. The skin is dirty, white, sallow with warts, especially on the face, intensely sympathetic.⁽²⁷⁾

- **CINNABARIS:**

Condyloma, easily bleeding⁽²⁷⁾ a common remedy for Molluscum contagious that has a reddish periphery and senile keratosis (thick, crusty, and scaly skin growth of the aged).⁽²³⁾

- **DULCAMARA:**

Warts, large, smooth, on the face, palmar surface of the hands⁽²⁷⁾, and fingers⁽²⁴⁾ soft brownish to black seborrheic warts found on the back.⁽²³⁾ worse in cold wet weather is a grand keynote for the employment of this remedy⁽²⁹⁾.

- **FERRUM PICRICUM:**

Warts and epithelial growths⁽²⁷⁾ indicated for warts on the hand, when they are multiple.⁽²⁸⁾ Warts especially in old pedunculated warts frequently accompany chronic deafness.⁽²⁸⁾ It is suited to persons with dark hair and eyes and bilious looking patients.⁽²⁸⁾

- **MEDORRHINUM:**

Small pedunculated warts, with pin heads, like small button mushrooms, on various of body and the thigh⁽²⁸⁾. A powerful and deep acting medicine, often indicated for chronic ailments due to suppressed gonorrhoea⁽²⁷⁾.

- **NATRUM MURIATICUM:**

Warts on palms of hands⁽²⁸⁾ and soles. An important remedy for warts on the palms of the hand and soles of the feet. Indicated in those how are closed, reserved and sensitive.⁽²³⁾

- **NITRICUM ACIDUM:**

Condylomata moist, like cauliflower, hard, phagadic or in thin pedicles⁽²⁸⁾. Numerous large warts on the back of hands⁽²⁵⁾. Warts, condylomata; sycotic or syphilitic; large, jagged, pedunculated; bleeding readily on washing; moist, oozing; sticking pain⁽²⁴⁾.

- **RUTA GRAVEOLENS:**

This is leading remedy for warts; with sore pains; flat, smooth on palms of hands⁽²⁴⁾. People needing Ruta are prone to injuries of tendons and periosteum of bone⁽²⁵⁾.

- **THUJA OCCIDENTALIS:**

The tendency of the Thuja patient is to throw out wart-like excrescences, which are soft and pulpy and very sensitive, they burn, itch and bleed easily when rubbed by the clothing. Horny excrescences that form on the hands and split open, form upon a pedicle and crack around the base. Cauliflower excrescences upon the cervix uteri, about the anus (like Nitric acid), about the labia majora and mucous membranes generally. Horny excrescences, more upon the skin. Warts of a brownish color, especially if upon the abdomen; great brown spots, like liver spots, form upon the abdomen⁽²⁵⁾. Warts, large, seedy, pedunculated, eruptions only on covered parts⁽²⁴⁾.

CONCLUSION:

The skin is where internal diseases manifest. Signs and symptoms are an express in that there body is trying to hell itself.⁽¹³⁾ This understanding forms the basis of homoeopathic management of skin disorders. Most common warts go away without treatment, though it may take a year or two and new ones may develop the nearby.⁽³¹⁾ Therefore, holistic approach is needed and this is where homoeopathy excels. By Treating the wart as just one of the person's health problems and prescribing a homoeopathic remedy accordingly, widespread improments are achieved and the underlying weakness repaired.⁽³²⁾

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