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VERRUGAE VULGARES



## VERRUCA VULGARIS

### Wart.

Verrucae vulgares are circumscribed, firm or horny, pin head to pea sized or larger, papillary excrescences on the skin. They may be the color of the integument or more or less deeply pigmented. Their surface is either smooth, moruloid or closely beset with small, horny, pointed filaments. There may be only one wart or very many. They are frequently seen upon the hands, especially in children, but occur also in other localities. Their growth is sometimes rapid, as a rule it is quite slow and ceases when the wart has reached the size of a pea. The smaller and younger growths are usually skin colored and smooth, as they increase in size they become darker and rough, cleft or tufted. It is not uncommon to see one full grown, so called mother- or seed-wart and several others of more recent appearance in its vicinity. While on the hands these growths are invariably broadly sessile, on the neck, face and scalp they usually grow taller and may be pointed or tufted, and often appear slightly pedunculated when the clefting extends not quite to the base but spreads out the upper portion and leaves a relatively constricted neck. This variety is generally described as *verruca digitata*. Warts are benign growths of no significance beyond the disfigurement

they produce except in patients past middle age in whom warts or warty-looking lesions are often the starting points of epitheliomas. They are insensitive, or the larger ones may be slightly tender. They persist indefinitely but finally disappear spontaneously. It is pretty well agreed that warts are mildly contagious and autoinoculable, though the morbid agent has not been discovered. **DIAGNOSIS:** In keratosis senilis the patches upon the face or backs of the hands of old people are sometimes wart like in appearance; but the elevation is more in the nature of a horny concretion and can be lifted off like a crust, though it is sometimes quite adherent, exposing a moist, or granular, slightly bleeding surface. These growths are apt to develop into epitheliomas, therefore any warty looking patch on an old person is to be regarded with suspicion. **TREATMENT:** Warts can be quickly, effectively and almost painlessly removed with a sharp curette. The skin should be put on a tension and the wart scraped off and out of the skin, for in the larger growths the wart structure will be found to extend well below the surface. Sometimes the whole growth shells out very easily. The bleeding base should be cauterized with silver nitrate, or more cautiously with liquor hydrargyri nitratis.