



## Warts - What are warts?

### Fact

- Warts are lumps of thickened and hardened skin.
- Warts are caused by a virus which infects skin cells and changes the way they grow.
- Warts are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus and there are 65 different Human Papilloma Viruses.
- Warts are contagious; you can catch them from other people.
- Warts usually go away by themselves but it usually takes between 6 months and two years.

### Do you know

- Children often catch warts because their immune systems are still developing.
- Your immune system helps to protect your body from things like viruses.
- A virus is a tiny living thing. They are very tiny you could fit 100,000,000 viruses on a dot the size of a full stop.
- Ointments that you get from the chemist to get rid of warts will only get rid of the wart. You can still have the virus in your body and more warts can pop up on other parts of your body.
- Over hundreds of years people have tried all kinds of different things to get rid of warts like rubbing their warts with raw potato, the juice of milk thistle, even horse dung!
- You should never pick at warts. Picking at them could make the wart virus spread through your body in your blood stream and warts could pop up on other parts of your body.

### Experiments you can do

Have any of the people in your family ever had warts?

Conduct a survey of the people in your family and see how many of them have had warts in their lives. It tends to be children that suffer from warts the most so you'll have to get your parents and grandparents to think back to when they were children.

Who had a wart?

Where did they have that wart?

About how long did it stay for?

What did they try to treat it with?

Compare the notes from each person and see if there are any common links like where they each had a wart.

### Other Investigations

If there are 65 different wart viruses how many other viruses are there? See how many different viruses you can think of. How many have you had or members of your family had – like chicken pox for example.

**Jokes:** What is a wart's favourite drink? Wart-er