

## Verrucae

### What is a Verruca?

Verrucae are a common complaint amongst children and adults. A verruca is a small skin lesion which is commonly found on the bottom surface of the foot. The lesion is usually approximately 1cm in diameter but can be larger.

### What causes it?

All verrucae are caused by the human papilloma virus which is common in all environments but does not readily attack the skin. Due to this though verrucae are commonly contracted in communal places such as swimming pools, showers and changing areas, this is why children are more at risk of contracting verrucae's in school changing rooms and swimming pools.

If there is excessive moisture or excessive dryness of the skin this can lead to small cracks in the skin which allows the virus to enter.

### What will happen if I leave it untreated?

Most of the time Verrucae will heal on their own if left alone however they can easily spread so if the verruca is touched or scratched a sufferer must wash their hands straight away or it can spread to other parts of the body.

### What can help?

To avoid verrucae, try to avoid touching other people's verrucae and that hands are washed if a verruca is touched. It is also best to avoid sharing towels, flannels, shoes and socks with other people and to make sure that feet and hands are kept clean and dry.

Due to how the virus spreads it is best to avoid going barefoot in public places and communal areas.

Also, if contracted avoid scratching or picking at the verruca this may spread the infection to other parts of the body.

### What are the treatment options?

Verrucae can be removed with over-the-counter treatments, but these don't always work. The treatments include things like creams, gels, skin paints and medicated plasters containing salicylic acid, the salicylic acid is used to burn the top layer of the affected skin. You can also find cold sprays that contain dimethyl ether propane, these sprays are used to freeze the wart.

Your Podiatrist may be able to offer a procedure known as needling which is carried out under a local anaesthetic.

