

What are Genital Warts?

- Genital Warts are small wart-like lumps caused by the genital wart virus (human papilloma virus [HPV]).
- The warts grow in and around the vagina or penis and around the anus.
- The warts may be itchy.
- Many people have HPV but no warts can be seen.

How are Genital Warts spread?

Genital Warts are passed by:

- Having skin on skin contact, vaginal, anal or oral sex with someone who has HPV.
- From mother to baby during birth.

Can Genital Warts be treated?

Yes, Genital Warts can be treated.

Genital Warts can be treated:

- By freezing the warts.
- With creams or liquids.
- By burning the warts with electrical heat or a laser.

After treatment:

- Keep the treated area clean and dry.
- Bathe once a day in salty water (dry the treated area gently and thoroughly).

As the infection is caused by a virus, the treatment will not get rid of the virus (HPV). It will only remove the warts. The warts may come back in the future. For advice, testing and treatment visit your:

- Student Health Clinic or school nurse.
- Sexual Health Clinic.
- Family Planning Association (FPA) Centre.
- Your doctor.

What happens at the test for Genital Warts?

- The doctor will talk to you, examine you and then discuss treatment if it is necessary.
- If you have Genital Warts you should also be checked for other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Should I tell my sexual partner(s) that I am being treated for Genital Warts?

- Yes, your partner may need to be checked and treated if necessary.
- If you need help to tell any partner, speak to a doctor, nurse or sexual health counsellor.
- You could show your partner(s) this leaflet.

What about HPV and cancer?

Be smokefree! Smoking has been shown to work with HPV to increase the chance of abnormal cell growth or cancer.

Have regular cervical smears! Some types of HPV have been linked with abnormal cell changes on the cervix.

How can I protect myself from Genital Warts?

- Continuous condom use in a relationship may offer some protection against the wart virus.
- However, you can still get the virus from skin on skin contact in the area surrounding the penis, vagina and anus, which is not protected by a condom.
- Always use a condom if you are having sex with a new or different partner.
- Consider HPV vaccine. There are now vaccines available for females to protect against the HPV causing most cervical cancers. One vaccine provides protection against two types of HPV that cause genital warts. This vaccine will be funded for young women aged 12–18 years. However, the vaccine is available to purchase for older women. Ask your doctor or sexual health clinic for information.

How can I protect myself from STIs?

- Always use a condom. A condom is a thin latex or polyurethane sheath, which fits over the penis. A female condom is made of polyurethane and is inserted into the vagina. The condom collects the semen when a man comes and prevents it from entering the other person's body. Condoms make vaginal, anal and oral sex safer because they provide a barrier to prevent infection passing from person to person.
- Always use an oral dam during oral sex. An oral dam is a thin square of latex that can be used as a protective layer between the mouth and vagina or anal areas during oral sex.
- Immunisation protects against infections such as hepatitis A and B.
- Never share drug-injecting equipment, eg, needles and syringes, spoons and filters.

Some STIs are passed from person to person by skin on skin contact and condoms or oral dams may not prevent this. So, it is important to be well informed about your sexual health. If you suspect you may have an STI, get it checked out.

How do I use a condom?

Check the condom pack to make sure the expiry date has not passed.

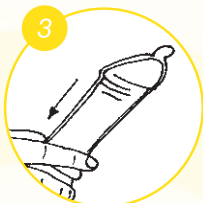
1 Open the packet carefully. Finger nails, rings and teeth can tear condoms. Make sure the penis does not touch the partner's vagina, mouth or anus before being covered by a condom.



2 Check that the condom is the right way up. Pinch the top of the condom to remove any air.



3 Roll the condom on to the hard penis all the way down to the base. Use a water-based lubricant (eg, KY Jelly, Wet Stuff, Sylk and Top Gel). Oil-based lubricants such as vaseline can cause latex or rubber condoms to break.



4 After coming and when withdrawing hold the condom on to the base of the penis so that no semen is spilt.



Wrap the used condom in tissue or toilet paper and put it in the rubbish.

Use a new condom and lube each time you have sex!

Where can I get condoms?

You can get condoms and sometimes oral dams from your doctor, Family Planning Centres and Sexual Health Services. Condoms are also available from pharmacies, supermarkets, pubs, clubs and dairies. Female condoms are available from Family Planning Centres.

Condoms will help to protect you and your partner(s) from STIs when you have sex.

To be sure you don't have an STI get tested at an FPA Centre, Sexual Health Service, or by your doctor.

Where can I find out more about STIs?

- Student Health Services at your university, polytechnic or school.
- The Public Health Nurse at your school.
- Sexual Health Services under 'S' in the white pages or details on www.sexfiles.co.nz.
- Family Planning Association on 0800 FPA LINE or www.fpanz.org.nz.
- Your doctor in the front of the phone book under Registered Medical Practitioners.
- www.hpv.org.nz or Helpline 0508 11 12 13.

The five guides

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