

Rodgers Dermatology

Wart Injection Therapy (Immunotherapy)

Treating warts is hard and frustrating, for patients and doctors. Even when properly treated, 3 out of 10 warts do not go away or come back, even after several treatments.

Warts are caused by a virus (human papillomavirus or HPV). There are over 80 types, although most HPV types favor certain locations, such as the feet (plantar warts), genital area (genital warts or condyloma), trunk, arms & legs (common warts), just to name a few.

The wart virus is everywhere and we all probably come into contact with it every day. Some people get warts while others do not, and usually there is no explanation for this. Some warts are visible with the naked eye, while others cause a “latent infection,” or the presence of the HPV virus in apparently normal skin. This is particularly common in genital warts.

Many methods can be used to treat warts. Common methods include duct tape, salicylic acid, freezing or “burning” a wart, laser treatments, topical medicine (Aldara), and injections. There are also numerous home remedies. With any treatment method, at least 2 or 3 months of sustained treatment should be used before another method is tried.

Injection therapy with *Candida* antigen can be a very effective method to treat warts that have failed previous treatments. *Candida* is the yeast that causes vaginal yeast infections in women. The solution that is used for injection contains *Candida* that is killed and cannot cause infection. If the yeast is injected under the skin, it will cause a red bump like a mosquito bite. This solution has been used for 30 years to check a patient’s immune system and it is FDA-approved for this purpose. Injecting the material into a wart causes the immune system to become very active in that area. The body attacks the injected yeast and destroys it, but it also gets tricked into attacking the wart. The advantage of injection therapy is that it is quick, does not hurt much, and there are no scarring or open sores.

The side effects of injection therapy are rare. Occasionally someone will develop a rash or hives. This would mean the patient can no longer get wart injections. Some people report flu-like symptoms, mild itching, and rarely a blister. The wart usually turns somewhat black and falls off. About ½ the time, a 2nd or 3rd injection may be needed every month.

The *Candida* therapy for treatment of warts has not been approved by the FDA, however, it is approved to test the immune system and is considered safe.

If you notice a rash after treatment, please take a dose of Benadryl immediately (dose allowed on bottle) and call the office at (972) 704-2400. Go to the ER if you have difficulty breathing, wheezing, drooling, or throat closure symptoms.