HOW ARE GENITAL WARTS TREATED?

A doctor or health care provider can treat genital warts. Different treatment options are available to remove the warts. However, these treatments are just to remove the warts. They do not cure you of HPV and the warts sometimes grow back.

Do not use any over-the-counter wart treatments or home remedies to treat genital warts. These can cause pain and harm your skin.

WHAT ABOUT HPV AND PREGNANCY?

Most pregnant women with HPV do not have problems. However, active genital warts may cause problems during pregnancy or at birth. In rare cases, HPV can also be passed to a baby during childbirth. A pregnant woman should tell her doctor or health care provider if she or her sex partner(s) have ever had genital warts. Pregnant women should not get the HPV vaccine.

HOW CAN HPV BE PREVENTED?

- **Get vaccinated**. Ask your health care provider and your children's health care provider about the HPV vaccine.
- If you have sex, **use latex condoms** every time. HPV can infect areas not covered by a condom. While condoms do not provide 100% protection, they are the best available form of protection for people who are sexually active.
- If you have sex, **stay with one partner who only has sex with you**. Use condoms unless tests show that your partner does not have STDs.

WHAT ARE OTHER WAYS TO STAY HEALTHY?

- Sexually active women and women over 21, **should have a Pap test** as often as recommended by their health care provider.
- If you think you have genital warts, **see your doctor or go to your local STD clinic**. To find the clinic closest to you in Texas, visit knowmystatus.org or call 2-1-1.
- If you get genital warts, inform your partners and use condoms. Tell your sex partner(s) to be checked for genital warts and other STDs. Having warts does not mean that you or your partner are having other partners.
- If you smoke, ask your doctor for help quitting. Smoking can increase the risk for cancers linked to HPV.

TEXAS Health and Human Services | Texas Department of State Health Services

For HIV/STD questions, call
1 (800) CDC-INFO (English/Espanol)
1-(888) 232-6348 (TTY).

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HPV

TEXAS Health and Human Services | Texas Department of State Health Services

WHAT IS HPV?

Human **p**apilloma**v**irus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the U.S. Most sexually active people will have HPV at some point in their lives. There are more than 150 types of HPV.

In most cases, HPV goes away on its own without causing health problems. However, certain types of HPV can cause cervical, anal, vaginal, vulvar, penile, and throat cancers. Other types of genital HPV can cause genital warts – growths around the vagina, penis or anus.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET HPV?

HPV is easily spread by skin-to-skin contact during sexual activity with another person. It is difficult to know when you got HPV or who gave it to you because you can have it for a long time without knowing it.

Sexually active younger women are at greater risk for HPV because their cervical cells are not fully mature and therefore more prone to infection.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HPV?

Most people with HPV have no symptoms. The most commonly noticed symptom of HPV infection is genital warts. An abnormal Pap test result may be the first clue that a woman has the virus.

CAN HPV BE TREATED?

There is no cure for HPV. However, the body's immune system clears most HPV infections within a couple of years. Treatment is also available for genital warts caused by HPV and the different types of cancers caused by HPV. The treatment does not cure the virus.

CAN SCREENING HELP PREVENT CERVICAL CANCER?

Women should get regular cervical cancer screenings starting at age 21 and continuing through age 65. Ask your provider how often you need to be screened.

HPV vaccines do not protect against all types of HPV that cause cervical cancer, so vaccinated women should keep getting regular screenings.

IS THERE A VACCINE AGAINST HPV?

Yes, vaccines can protect against some of the most common types of HPV that can lead to cancer or genital warts. The vaccines are most effective if given to both boys and girls around ages 11-12. Talk with your doctor about the HPV vaccine.

WHAT DO GENITAL WARTS LOOK LIKE?

Genital warts appear as flesh-colored growths around the vagina, penis or anus. They may appear alone or in groups or clusters. Genital warts are usually painless, but they can cause itching or burning.

Genital warts may appear within several weeks after sexual contact, or may take months - even years - to appear. Some genital warts may grow in size and number and may look like cauliflower.

Where can I learn more?

KNOW MY STATUS.ORG

Go to www.knowmystatus.org to learn more about HPV and other STDs and find out where to go for testing, support and treatment in Texas.

DSHS HIV/STD Program HPV website:
www.dshs.texas.gov/hivstd/info/hpv

CDC HPV vaccine website:
www.cdc.gov/hpv/vaccine.html

For HIV/STD testing locations in Texas, call:
2-1-1