

Genital HPV Infection

What is genital HPV infection?

Genital human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD). The virus infects the skin and mucous membranes. There are more than 40 HPV types that can infect the genital areas of men and women, including the skin of the penis, vulva (area outside the vagina), and anus, and the linings of the vagina, cervix, and rectum. You cannot see HPV. Most people who become infected with HPV do not even know they have it.

How do you get Genital Warts?

Genital Warts can be transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone that has Genital Warts. It can also be passed from a mother to her newborn baby during childbirth.

When will the symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear within 1 to 8 months after contact.

How is Genital Warts diagnosed?

Because it's often difficult to detect genital warts, your doctor may apply an acetic acid solution to your genitals to whiten any warts. Then, he or she may view them through a special microscope.

How are Genital Warts treated?

Your doctor can help you clear an outbreak of warts with medications or surgical treatments. There is no cure and genital warts may reappear even after treatment. Don't try to treat genital warts with over-the-counter medications. These medications aren't intended for use in the moist tissues of the genital area. Using over-the-counter medications for this purpose can cause even more pain and irritation.

How common is Genital Warts?

Genital Warts is a very common infectious disease. Approximately 20 million Americans are currently infected with HPV, and another 6.2 million people become newly infected each year. At least 50% of sexually active men and women acquire genital HPV infection at some point in their lives.

Where can I get more information?

Oklahoma State Department of Health
HIV/STD Service
1000 N.E. Tenth, Room 614
Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1299
Phone: (405) 271-4636
Fax: (405) 271-5149
www.ok.gov/health

Division of STD Prevention
(DSTDP)
Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention
www.cdc.gov/std

CDC-INFO Contact Center
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Email: cdcinfo@cdc.gov

Your sexual partner(s) should be tested for Genital Warts even if they have no symptoms. If you have been diagnosed with Genital Warts, you should have a blood test in three months to detect blood-borne infections you might have contracted at the time you had Genital Warts.

What are the symptoms of Genital Warts?

- Small, flesh-colored or gray swellings in your genital area.
- Several warts close together that take on a cauliflower shape.
- Itching or discomfort in your genital area.
- Bleeding with intercourse.

Often, however, genital warts cause no symptoms. Or they may be so small and flat that they can't be seen with the naked eye.

How can Genital Warts be prevented?

Abstinence is the only 100% full-proof method of not contracting Genital Warts or be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship. However, latex male condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of Genital Warts or HPV. A vaccine can now protect females from four types of HPV that cause most cervical cancers and genital warts. The vaccine is recommended for 11 to 12 year-old girls. It is also recommended for girls and women age 13 through 26 who have not yet been vaccinated or completed the vaccine series.



Oklahoma State
Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

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Facts & Information