Warren Farm Primary School

Verrucae: Fact Sheet for Parents

What are they?

- Most people will be infected by the human papilloma virus at some point in their life and develop warts
- A verruca is simply a wart on the foot. The technical name is a plantar wart.
- They are usually harmless but may be unsightly.
- They usually clear in time without treatment and as with most viral infections immunity occurs in time.
- If you have a verruca, change your socks daily.

What research says ?

Verrucas are contagious but the risk of passing them on is low. You need skin-to-skin contact. Locally and nationally there are guidelines aimed at targeting resources at conditions considered to be of the greatest medical importance. The rules that apply in this area state very clearly that warts and verrucas are low priority for treatment on the NHS. This is because the condition is usually simply cosmetic in nature and is very costly to treat compared with the small health benefits obtained (Berkshire NHS Trust).

The majority of dermatologists (skin specialists) are not in favour of treating verrucas. They feel that because the virus is so widespread, it could be beneficial to spread it as much as possible and as early as possible in the lives of children. They also say that the use of plastic verruca socks to protect the feet should be discouraged and that a waterproof plaster is sufficient (British Swimming Association).
The British Swimming Association website also states that:-

"Most enlightened associations and professional bodies believe the exclusion of children with plantar warts (verrucas) from barefoot activities – such as swimming, physical education, dancing or communal showering – is no longer justified".

School Policy

When undertaking school physical education activities the following precautions can be taken:

Gymnastics	-	Wear ballet slippers (available on ebay for around £5 NOT plimsoles which are a health and safety risk whilst undertaking gymnastics) or the verruca should be covered with a waterproof plaster.
Swimming	-	Cover verruca with a waterproof plaster, or wear a verruca sock (The Department of Health guidance on infection control in schools and nurseries suggests that affected children should go swimming but that verrucas should be covered)
Outside Games	-	wear black plimsoles or trainers for PE.
Indoor Games	-	The verruca should be covered with a waterproof plaster whilst the foot is being treated. If verruca is inflamed black plimsoles can be worn.