

## A CLINICAL STUDY OF WARTS

Mohammed Ameen Sait, Sardari Lal and B R Garg

Clinical features of 126 patients suffering from skin and genital warts are reported. Males comprised of 73.8% patients and the maximum number (30.2%) were in the age group 16-20 years. The commonest type (58.9%) of wart was verruca vulgaris; the incidence of the other types was condyloma acuminata (12.7%), filiform and digitate warts (15.6%), verruca plana (1.4%) and epidermodysplasia verruciformis (0.7%). Mantoux test was positive in 45.5% of the patients.

**Key words :** Verruca.

Warts are a common viral infection of the skin. They are transmissible and autoinoculable.<sup>1-4</sup> The incidence of warts is reported to be less in the tropics.<sup>3</sup> Reports concerning clinico-epidemiological studies are not many. In the present report, the clinical features of 126 cases of warts as seen in this part of the country are described.

### Materials and Methods

One hundred and twenty six patients diagnosed clinically as warts were included in the study. A detailed history was taken and a complete clinical examination was done in all cases. Mantoux test was performed on all patients using 1 TU and the readings were recorded after 48 hours.

### Results

The age distribution of the patients is shown in table I.

Half the patients were between 16 and 25 years in age. The youngest patient was 8 months and the eldest 55 years. Ninety-three patients were males and thirty-three were females.

Duration of the disease varied from less than one month to 12 years. It was 6 months or less in 59 cases and more than 6 months

in the remaining 67. Family history of warts was present in 26 cases (23.1%). In cases having condyloma acuminata, history of exposure to sexually transmitted diseases was obtained in 15 (83.3%) cases.

The Mantoux test was positive in 51 (45.5%) cases and negative in 61 (54.5%).

The frequency of different types of warts is shown in table II.

**Table I.** Age incidence of patients having warts.

Age group in years	Number of cases	Percentage
Less than 5	2	1.6%
5-10	12	9.5%
11-15	16	12.7%
16-20	38	30.2%
21-25	25	19.8%
26-30	8	6.3%
31-35	13	10.3%
36-40	4	3.2%
41-45	4	3.2%
46-50	1	0.8%
51-55	3	2.4%

**Table II.** The incidence of various types of warts.

Type of wart	Number of cases	Percentage
Verruca vulgaris	83	58.9%
Verruca plantaris	15	10.6%
Verruca filiformis	12	8.5%
Verruca digitate	10	7.1%
Verruca plana	2	1.4%
Condyloma acuminata	16	11.3%
Giant condyloma acuminata	2	1.4%
Epidermodysplasia verruciformis	1	0.7%

From the Department of Dermatology and STD Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry-605006, India.

Address correspondence to : Dr. B. R. Garg.

The commonest type of wart was verruca vulgaris (58.9%).

Ninety-six patients had multiple warts, while 30 had single warts. Of the 83 cases of verruca vulgaris, 67 cases had multiple warts. All the common sites of predilection were affected. Twelve cases had other types of warts as well. Only 2 cases of verruca plana were found. Both cases had multiple warts over the face, neck and forearms. Digitate and filiform warts comprised of 22 cases and they occurred mainly over the scalp, beard area and neck. Fourteen of these cases were associated with verruca vulgaris. In cases having plantar warts, both the weight-bearing and non-weight-bearing areas were involved. Out of the 18 cases of genital warts, 2 cases were of giant condyloma acuminata and 2 of perinatal condyloma acuminata found only in children. The only case of epidermodysplasia verruciformis was associated with BT leposy.

#### Comments

Majority of the patients having warts were in the age group 16-20 years which is more or less in agreement with other reports like 12-16 years,<sup>3</sup> 16-20 years<sup>2</sup> and 11-20 years.<sup>5</sup> The high incidence in the teenage group is probably because physical activities and exposure to trauma are maximum in that age group. Adults also seem to develop immunity against this virus.

Males comprised the bulk of the cases (73.8%) which is in accordance with the study of Bhargava et al<sup>5</sup> (67.8% in males), but differs from the observations of Rulison<sup>2</sup> and Coles<sup>6</sup> who found warts more common in women than men.

The commonest type of wart in the present study was verruca vulgaris as expected.

In the present study, only 25 (23.1%) cases of warts had a familial incidence of warts in contrast to 17.37% as reported by Rulison<sup>2</sup>.

The high percentage (45.5%) of positive Mantoux test found in the present study is much higher than the results (20%) obtained by Kumar et al.<sup>9</sup> Mantoux test is only a non-specific method of assessing the cell mediated immunity in patients. Therefore, a negative result does not necessarily mean a depressed CMI secondary to warts.

#### References

1. Payne JF : Clinical notes on the contagiousness of common warts, *Brit J Dermatol*, 1891; 3:185-188.
2. Rulison RH : Warts : A statistical study of nine hundred and twenty one cases, *Arch Dermatol Syphilol*, 1942;46 : 66-81.
3. Rook A and Nagington : in : *Textbook of Dermatology*, Vol I, Editors Rook A, Wilkinson DS and Ebling FJG : Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979; p 617.
4. Juliusberg M : Zur Theorie Der Pathogenese des Spitzen Kondyloms, *Arch Dermatol Syphilol*, 1903; 64:163-174.
5. Bhargava RK, Vacchanay M and Garg P : Levamisole and griseofulvin in warts, *J Ind Med Assoc*, 1980; 74:13-16.
6. Coles RB : Viral warts in school children, *Public Health (London)*, 1958; 71:371-377.
7. Osborne ED and Putnam ED : Radiotherapy in the treatment of warts, *Radiology*, 1931; 16:340-345.
8. Massing AM and Epstein WG : Natural history of warts : A two year study, *Arch Dermatol*, 1963; 87:306-310.
9. Kumar B, Kaur S and Narang A : Delayed cutaneous hypersensitivity responses in patients with warts, *Ind J Dermatol Venereol Leprol*, 1980; 46 : 18-21.