



# Treatment of viral warts with intralesional Bleomycin

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Bleomycin has been used to treat warts for several years. Bleomycin is also used to treatment some cancers. Unlike cancer treatment, wart treatment involves using very small amounts of Bleomycin on the surface of the skin of the wart. It is not given by mouth or in the veins.

## What are the benefits of treatment with intralesional Bleomycin?

Intralesional Bleomycin treatment can help clear warts that have persisted for prolonged periods despite using common wart treatments.

## What are the risks of treatment?

Not all warts will respond to treatment. Treatment can lead to side effects, which are usually mild (listed on the page opposite). Several treatments may be required.

## What are the alternatives?

Warts can be safely left alone and not treated. Other options include treatment with a wart paint and cryotherapy. Your doctor will discuss these with you.

## Can all warts be treated with intralesional Bleomycin?

No, only warts on the hands and feet are treated with Bleomycin

## What will happen on the day?

The nurse will begin by explaining the procedure and will answer any questions you may have. You will be asked to sign a consent form. The skin will then be cleansed with an alcohol-based gel.

There are two ways to administer the treatment, and the nurse will decide which is the best for you. One method is to place a few drops of Bleomycin on the top of each wart, and gently prick the wart with a fine needle. Alternatively, an air-powered injector (Dermajet) is used to inject the Bleomycin in the skin.

The treatment is only slightly uncomfortable. It is not usually painful. The Bleomycin is applied to the wart only. It is not given into the blood stream or by mouth.

## How many treatments will I need?

That depends on how quickly you respond to the treatment. Most patients will need at least four treatments.

## How often will I need to have the treatments?

Treatments are usually given every 2–6 weeks.

## What side effects should I expect?

**Pain following treatment:** this varies from person to person. Usually there is only minimal discomfort, though occasionally pain can be persistent for up to two weeks. Regular paracetamol should be taken as necessary.

**Redness:** the area around the warts can get red for a few days after the treatment.

**Bleeding:** This is common just after the treatment but usually settles down in a few minutes.

**Infection:** This is very uncommon but if there is any sign of increasing pain, redness and a discharge please contact us for a review.

The wart can become black sometimes. If this happens, the wart may simply drop off after a few days.

## What should I do if the area is bleeding?

If the area bleeds, cover it with a clean gauze and apply pressure for 5–10 minutes. Also, try to elevate the limb, as this will help the bleeding to stop. If the bleeding does not stop, please contact us on the number below during working hours, or your GP. Out of hours go to your nearest the Accident and Emergency Department.

## Will I need a dressing?

We do not normally dress the warts unless they have been bleeding. If the area has not been covered with a dressing, please try to keep dry for at least 24 hours. If a dressing has been applied, please remove it after 24 hours.

## Contact details

For further information, please contact Dermatology Area 4 Outpatients on 0121 371 5469 and speak to a member of staff.

We are available Monday to Friday between the hours of 08:30-16:30.



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit [www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm](http://www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm) or call 0121 371 4323.

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