

WARTS ARE INFECTIOUS

DID you know that warts were infectious? Well, they are—only mildly so, yet nevertheless transferable from person to person. Warts of all kinds are caused by a virus, and are contagious. If you have never had a wart before and one develops, then you have caught that wart from a warty person by touch or by handling something touched by that person. Once you have your first wart you can self-inoculate them on to other parts of your body. This sounds a bad tale, but it often has a pleasant ending, for warts, persistent for months, have a happy habit of disappearing all of a sudden. Whatever you happened to be doing to them at the time of this occurrence receives the credit. Hence we have innumerable wart cures in folk lore.

"Touch a wart daily with milk weed juice," "Dip a wart daily into the water in the tempering tub of the blacksmith." There are dozens of such like recipes, and they all work because warts suddenly take it unto themselves to disappear. It is a case of faith healing. Hypnotism has been used to get rid of them; so has "charming." One medical treatment depends on the power of suggestion—painting the wart daily with 1 per cent gentian violet or other dye, and by and by the wart goes. It is admitted that the common wart is a bit of a mystery and a law unto itself, and that cures depend 60-70 per cent on suggestion. The last remedy applied is hailed as the cure. One nice thing about warts is that they are not malignant. You would not worry about cancer unless there was a noticeable change in shape and rapid growth in size.

An ordinary wart is simply skin tissue growing and overgrowing proper limits in one spot, into a hard or horny topped grey projection on the skin, which may be flat topped or stalked or thread like. Between the toes a wart may be a softish cauliflower-like lump. Flat or plane warts are common in children, as yellowish or brownish lumps on the face, especially the forehead, around the mouth, and on the back of the hands or on knees. There is no real need to "flap" about this. Take it philosophically and see if they disappear on their own. If you have not the necessary patience, a doctor may try some caustic paint, such as salicylic acid in collodion, as a local application, curette or cauterise them away, or apply carbon dioxide snow.

This is the text of a talk on health broadcast recently from ZB, ZA, YA and YZ stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy-Director-General of Health

There is a special variety of wart which should always be treated at once on discovery. These are colloquially known as "verrucae," though this is the Latin term for all warts. In popular use verrucae has come to mean those plantar warts that appear on the soles of the feet. These are less raised than other warts, and can be distinguished from corns by the slight crater-like depression in the middle. Beneath the flat hard top and surrounding ring of hard undermined skin, there is a deeply embedded, round, sponge-like soft tumour. These plantar warts are nearly always painful, making walking somewhat tiresome because they are usually on the tread areas.

While the ordinary wart is very mildly contagious, these plantar warts on the soles of the feet seem to be very definitely looking for pastures new. They will spread on the sufferer and by contact to others. The contact is usually from bare feet on flooring. I think you may regard nylon stockings as equivalent to bare feet judging by this incident. In an office there were complaints of sore feet and plantar warts. The girls took their shoes off for relief. There was a mild epidemic of plantar warts in that office. In girls' schools this is a common story, particularly round ages 10-15 years. For some reason these warts are more likely in females than males.

Because of the danger of spread and because they are painful, plantar warts should always be treated—further, because they rarely disappear on their own. Formalin will cure some plantar warts. A 5 per cent solution is applied for 15 minutes once or twice daily, protecting the surrounding skin with some oil, or say, zinc ointment. The hard top is gently pared each time before the next application. The cure may take 2-3 weeks. It may be quicker to visit the doctor, who may curette, that is, shell them out, using a local anaesthetic. People with plantar warts should not go barefoot in public places, but should keep their shoes on for the sake of others.

Time Travellers

THE attractive actress on the right is Diana Perryman, who plays Jo Bright in *Conquest of Space*, now being heard from 2ZA at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesdays. With her husband, Simon, Jo has journeyed forward in time to 2056 by means of an electronic device. There they find a fantastic new world, dominated by fear of the men in the moon, who are the descendants of incorrigible criminals sent there to live in isolation. These outcasts have thrived and multiplied, until they now threaten to invade the world, where they have established an influential Fifth Column. Simon and Jo meet their grandchildren of the next century, and in a series of strange and exciting adventures become involved in the plans of Norton, a fifth columnist from the moon, the sinister Garvey, and Felande, his unwilling fiancée.



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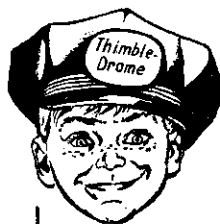
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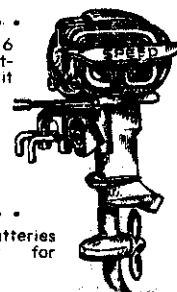
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