

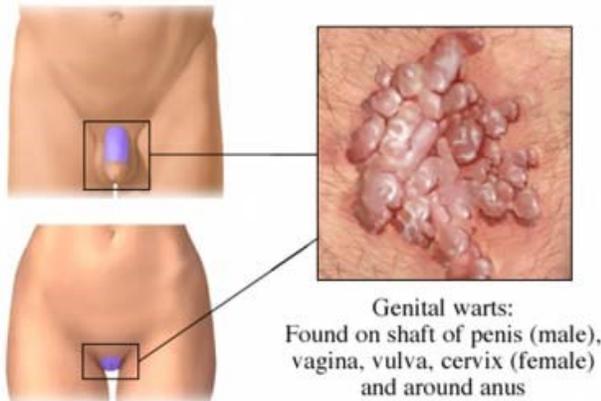
## Human Papilloma Virus



Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the name used to group more than 200 types of viruses. These are divided between high and low risk. Low-risk viruses are the most common. They may heal on their own or lead to genital warts. High-risk viruses can cause cancer in different parts of the body such as the mouth, throat, cervix, vulva, vagina, anus, and penis. HPV is very common, so any sexually active person has a high chance of getting the virus at some point in their life.

### Symptoms

Some of the low-risk viruses cause warts that can appear on the vulva, vagina, cervix, anus, penis, scrotum, mouth, or throat. In many cases, they are too small to be visible, but in others, they appear as flesh-colored or cauliflower-like bumps. They can cause swelling, itching, or bleeding around the affected area or during sexual intercourse.



On the other hand, high-risk HPV infection usually takes years to be detected, which will cause cellular changes that can lead to the development of cancers. Initially, there will be no symptoms. However, depending on where the cancer is located in the body, a variety of symptoms may be experienced.

Some symptoms that may occur are:

- Bleeding or discharge from the vagina after sex, between periods, after menopause, or after douching.
- Pain during intercourse
- Pain in the pelvic region
- Swelling of the legs
- Trouble urinating or having a bowel movement
- Blood in the urine

### Diagnosis

Generally, genital warts can be diagnosed by looking at the affected area. For women, an HPV screening test can indicate if there is contagion and the type of virus that is housed in the body. With that information, doctors can tell if it's a low-risk or high-risk infection. Also, to detect cervical cancer, it is recommended that all women have a Papanicolaou (Pap) from the age of 21. The doctor may perform both tests (HPV and Pap) together.

At the moment no early detection test has been developed for men, so it is important to be aware of symptoms such as: warts, growths, lumps or sores on the penis, scrotum, anus, mouth, or throat.

## Social and Emotional Aspect



### Treatment

There is no treatment for HPV infections, as such. Medicines or surgery can be used to treat genital warts. If the HPV infection progresses to some type of cancer, treatment will depend on the stage and where it is.

### Prevention

You can reduce the risk of infection by having safe sex (using a condom) and getting vaccinated, if possible, before you start having sex. For this reason, it is recommended to vaccinate boys and girls between 11 and 12 years of age. Even so, both men and women can be vaccinated up to the age of 45. Another preventive measure is to have a Pap smear as directed by your doctor.

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For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can deal with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD: 1-844-347-7804

### APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

### References:

Human papilloma virus. (2022). Retrieved from: <https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/hpv.html>

Genital warts. (2022). Retrieved from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/es-es/diseases-conditions/genital-warts/symptoms-causes/syc-20355234#:~:text=El%20virus%20del%20papiloma%20human,infeccion%C3%B3n%20a%20your%20partner%20sexual.>

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