



ADVICE AND FACTS ABOUT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

DET HÄR ÄR EN ÖVERSÄTTNING TILL ENGELSKA AV FAKTABLADET RÅD OCH FAKTA OM SEXUELLT ÖVERFÖRDA INFEKTIONER – KONDYLOM/HPV.

Condyloma/HPV

Condyloma is also caused by a virus; human papillomavirus (HPV). Condyloma often manifests itself in small warts and is spread via unprotected vaginal intercourse, anal sex and oral sex. The virus can also be spread during mutual masturbation and petting when skin rubs against skin. The symptoms are normally mild, but the warts can be perceived as uncomfortable.

Symptoms of condyloma

You will not necessarily have symptoms when you have condyloma. If you have symptoms, it can take a few weeks, up to a few months, before they appear in the form of warts. They are usually found around and on the genitals and may also be present on the anus or in the urinary meatus. The warts are either round and slightly raised or indented and gathered in groups. In some cases they are difficult to see. You may experience itching, broken skin with a small amount of bleeding and a burning sensation around the genitals. As a woman, you may also experience pain in the genitals during intercourse. In rare cases, condyloma can be present in the oral cavity. The condyloma virus can sometimes remain in the skin for months, even up to a year or so, before symptoms appear.

Get tested for condyloma/HPV

There is no standard test for condyloma, but you can have a doctor examine you if you suspect you have condyloma. The examination is not always free.

Treatment

An HPV infection will pass, but it can take a long time. Even the warts may disappear by themselves. They can be treated with a special cream or a solution that is spread over them. The warts can also be burned or frozen off. For treatment, you must contact a doctor and the treatment takes varying lengths of time depending on the method.

The virus can remain in the mucous membrane or on the skin, meaning the warts may return. They can also return if you are reinfected, in which case you will need to be treated again. Condyloma is not covered by the Communicable Diseases Act and the treatment is therefore not free.

Important points about condyloma

Condyloma does not affect your chances of having children. If the expectant mother has warts, these may grow in size and number during pregnancy, but they normally disappear after the birth. During delivery, there may be a certain risk of the child being infected with the condyloma virus.

Condoms are a good protection against spreading the condyloma virus, provided of course that the condom covers the area of skin where the warts are located. You should tell your sexual partner if you have condyloma so that you can both protect each other.

Condyloma is caused by several different types of HPV. Certain other types of HPV can cause cellular changes in the genitals among women. The majority of cellular changes heal by themselves. But isolated cellular changes may after a long period of time result in cervical cancer. It is therefore important for women to undergo smear tests, which they are regularly called in for by the health services. Certain HPVs can also cause cancer in the rectum, penis and tonsils, although these types of cancer are more uncommon than cervical cancer.

You can be vaccinated against certain types of HPV. This should preferably be done before your first sexual experience. The vaccine protects you against the most common types of virus which can result in warts or cause cancer. Even if you are vaccinated, it is important that you as a woman continue to go for smear tests as there are more types of virus than those the vaccine can protect against.

