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- > Warts that grow on and around the vagina, penis or anus are known as genital warts. They are very infectious. Genital warts are caused by a virus (human papilloma virus - HPV). Some people become infected with the virus but do not develop warts. The warts can be a real nuisance, but they are harmless. They usually go away by themselves.

## What will you notice if you have genital warts?

Some genital warts just look unpleasant, others may cause itching, pain or a burning sensation. You may have some discharge from your vagina or urethra (urine tube) if there is a wart in or near them.

- > In women, warts are usually found in or around the opening to the vagina, clitoris or anus. Sometimes they are also in the vagina and on the cervix (entrance to the uterus).
- > Men mostly have warts on the penis, at the tip of the urethra, on the scrotum or around the anus.

## Preventing genital warts

You can become infected with the HPV virus through close genital contact. But also from an infected person's fingers or towel.

- > Use condoms to have sex. But remember: a condom will not give you complete protection against genital warts. That is because the virus and warts will not always be covered by the condom.

## Treatment for genital warts

Genital warts do not have to be treated. They cannot do any harm and will eventually go away by themselves.

Are the warts really bothering you and do you not want to just wait until they go away? There are ointments and creams that you can use to treat them. Ask your doctor. Make sure you follow the instructions for use.

*For more information about the HPV virus and genital warts, go to [soaaid.nl/en/genital-warts](https://soaaid.nl/en/genital-warts)*

## Warning partners

As genital warts are very infectious it is advisable to tell your sexual partner(s) that you have them.

## AIDS STI helpline

Do you have a question about genital warts that has not been answered in this leaflet?

- > **Call the AIDS STI helpline:** 0900 204 204 0 (10ct per min.)  
Monday and Tuesday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Wednesday to Friday: 2.– 6 p.m.
- > **Send an email to the AIDS STI helpline:**  
[Sense@soaids.nl](mailto:Sense@soaids.nl), you will receive an answer within two working days.
- > **Or visit the chat office hour on [Soatest.nl](http://Soatest.nl)**  
Monday to Thursday: 1.30 – 3.30 p.m.

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