

BELLEVUE PODIATRIC PHYSICIANS

Cantharone

Cantharone is an extract from beetle juice that has become one of the most effective **treatments for plantar warts**. It comes in a suspension and looks just like the over the counter preparations Compound W and Duofilm. It is a ‘blister former’ called an **acantholytic** and will make a water blister between the epidermis and dermis layers of skin. The roof of the blister, which has the warty tissue in it, is then peeled off a week or two later, leaving the new skin beneath.

Advantages:

Cantharone is the quickest and most effective way we use to get rid of warts. It requires no application at home and the only thing the patient must do is keep it clean and dry for 24 hours. It usually requires only 1-3 applications. This means weekly office visits for 2-4 times. At this time the blister that is formed by the Cantharone is peeled off and the new skin revealed.

How it is used:

A small amount is applied by your doctor and a patch put over it. You are told to keep it dry for 24- 48 hours. After that you can do whatever you want to it. You are to come back to the office in a week or two and have the blister peeled back. It will be determined at that time if the wart is completely gone. If not, you have three choices: (1) do it again, (2) wait a week or two then do it again, (3) begin using over the counter acids like Duofilm.

Special warnings:

While many times Cantharone does not hurt at all, **it can possibly cause a severe pain that will last for several days**. It will usually happen within 2-12 hours of application. It may require not walking on the foot or taking pain medications. A severe reaction to this Cantharone will happen approximately in 25% of applications but this is very hard to predict!

What to do if it hurts:

If you have pain at any time, you can take off the patch and soak the foot in ice water. If a blister forms, take a clean needle or nail nippers and gently puncture the blister to drain it. You might need a Band-Aid to cover it afterwards. It may even require staying off it for a few days! If you have tried the pain medication, soaking in ice water and popping the blister and you still have pain, please call your doctor!

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