



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Diphencyprone (DPC) for Warts and Verrucae

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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## **What is diphencyprone (DPC)?**

Diphencyprone is a chemical produced by the Department of Organic Chemistry, University of Nijmegen in Holland. It does not have a licence for use as a medicine. It is a contact allergen, which means that contact with DPC should result in a mild allergic reaction.

## **What is it used for?**

To treat warts and verrucae. The aim of this treatment is first to make you sensitive to the DPC so that when the solution is applied to warts or verrucae, the reaction it causes helps to encourage them to resolve.

## **How do I become sensitive to DPC?**

A small amount of DPC is applied to your arm. The aim is to cause a reaction which is red and itchy and this can occur between 48 hours and eight days after it has been applied. You are given a follow up appointment for two weeks and the area is then checked to see what kind of reaction has occurred. If there has been no reaction, we will apply the DPC again to your other arm, cover it with a dressing and again check it after two weeks. This will continue until a reaction occurs or the highest dose is reached.

## **What happens next?**

You make weekly appointments where your warts or verrucae are treated with DPC solution every week. The concentration of DPC is increased gradually until a reaction occurs which lasts for between 24 and 36 hours.

## **What else do I need to know?**

You will need to keep your warts or verrucae covered for 24 hours after treatment. If you have multiple warts or verrucae, it may be easier to wear gloves or socks.

The doctor may ask you to have some blood tests during your treatment.

If there is no response to the treatment after four months, the nurse will stop the treatment and arrange for you to see the doctor.

## What are the possible side effects?

The area could become red, sore and blister. This can be controlled with the use of a topical steroid, which will be prescribed by the doctor.

Lymph nodes sometimes develop in the armpit if the hands are treated or groin if the feet are treated. These can remain throughout the treatment, disappearing after the treatment has finished.

If you have Eczema, it may worsen during treatment.

Occasionally an itchy rash called urticaria can develop for one to two days after treatment. This is usually well controlled with an antihistamine.

**A rare side effect** can be change of skin pigmentation. This change can be darkening of the skin called hyperpigmentation or skin lightening called hypopigmentation or even vitiligo a loss of pigment. This change can be permanent.

It is advised that other chemicals are not used at the same time as your treatment with DPC e.g. photographic solutions.

Once you have been sensitised to DPC, this is for life.

DPC is thought not to cause cancer or birth defects.

Women who are pregnant are not suitable for treatment. Women must ensure adequate contraception is used during treatment and for six months after treatment.

## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Lois Alderson- Sister, Dermatology Department, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01904 726621.

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [pals@york.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@york.nhs.uk).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

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