

## 'Ouchless' Wart Treatment

Warts are difficult and often painful to treat to treat, especially in young children. Some years ago, I saw a piece about a technique devised by Dr. Ronald C. Hansen, of the University of Arizona in a throwaway journal describing a painless wart therapy. It explained office treatment, but can be modified for home therapy.

If the pain associated with wart cryosurgery (liquid nitrogen) or electrosurgery has made you or your child shy away from all forms of wart therapy, Dr. Hansen's "Ouchless" alternative may be a great thing to try.

**The treatment is a 40% salicylic acid plaster** that can remove even the largest of common warts, he said. "This is a terrific treatment for isolated warts on the fingers and toes," he said. It is also one of the few skin treatments that call for multicolored duct tape.

The 40% salicylic acid plasters are available over-the-counter. Mediplast, Dr. Scholl's Clear Away, and Salicylic Acid Wart Remover are commonly available brands. Dr. Hansen had little success using the manufacturer's directions, and he suggested you throw them out and follow his instructions:

- Soak the wart in warm water for a timed 15-20 minutes.
- Using a 3-mm disposable curette, trim off close to two-thirds of the wart and the surrounding callus. This procedure will be painless for the patient.
- Cut the salicylic acid plaster to the size of the wart plus 2-3 mm. Remove the backing, and stick it to the wart. Without fail, the adhesive on the plaster will not be strong.
- To counteract this, you can apply benzoin or athletic adhesive (Mastisol is what Dr. Hansen uses) to the adjacent area, and wrap the area in common duct tape. Although some children like the classic silver duct tape, it is also available in a variety of colors that may appeal more to children.
- Because you want the salicylic acid to digest the wart, leave the plaster on for 5-7 days before you apply a new one. If the compress gets dirty, tell them to apply more duct tape to cover the dirt. If it gets wet – no problem; maceration assists the action of the salicylic acid. After three or four treatments, the wart will be asymptomatic at least and probably cured.