



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:

**Dermatology Department York**

The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Telephone: 01904 726629

**Dermatology Department Scarborough**

Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive,

Scarborough, YO12 6QL

Telephone: 01723 342492 or 01723 368222 ext. 2217

**Outpatient Department Selby**

The New Selby War Memorial Hospital,

Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9BX

Telephone: 01904 724296

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

Diphenycprone (DPC) is a liquid chemical that can be used to treat warts or verrucae when it is painted on to the lesion. DPC is used as a contact allergen, which means it works by causing an allergic (dermatitis) reaction where it touches the skin.

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

To treat warts and verrucae. The aim of this treatment is first to make you sensitive to the DPC, this works by initially using a higher dose (typically applied to the upper arm) to stimulate an allergic/ dermatitis reaction.

You will be first sensitised to DPC so that when the solution is applied to the 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 by a trained member of staff. The aim is to cause a reaction that is red and itchy, 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 check it again after two weeks. This will continue until a reaction occurs or the highest dose is reached.

## **What happens next?**

Following successful sensitisation, DPC is then painted directly on to your warts or verrucae. You make weekly appointments where your warts or verrucae are treated with DPC solution until the lesion(s) have healed.

Treatment will start out using a very weak concentration of DPC and the strength will gradually build up over time until a reaction occurs lasting 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.

It is important that you keep any areas treated with DPC out of any light during the process, as UV light can degrade DPC. This will prevent spread of the DPC to other areas of skin.

Please avoid touching or washing the treatment area for 48 hours following the treatment.

Other members of your household could become sensitised to DPC also if they come into contact with it. Please avoid others touching any areas that have been treated with DPC for 48 hours post treatment or until the DPC has been washed off.

Special caution should be taken in the case of pregnant women who are directly liaising with the patient.

You will be prescribed a steroid cream as part of your consultation with one of our Doctors before you start your treatment; this is to be applied to reduce any more uncomfortable dermatitis reaction from the DPC treatment.

The actual time the treatment takes to work can vary and will depend on how fast you respond to the DPC.

While each treatment can usually take around 10-15 minutes, a whole course requires a long-term commitment from you.

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 that are pregnant or breastfeeding are not suitable for treatment, those of a child-bearing age may be asked to have a pregnancy test prior to treatment.

Women must ensure adequate contraception is used during treatment and for six months after treatment.

## 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.

## **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 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 [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

# Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

Owner	Beth Lister Staff Nurse, Dermatology
Date first issued	June 2007
Review Date	January 2027
Version	4 (issued January 2024)
Approved by	Arpita Kidambi, Consultant
Document Reference	PIL 444 v4

© 2024 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.  
All Rights reserved.