

## Case Report

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## Successful treatment of common warts (*Verruca vulgaris*) with application of fig tree latex

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### Abstract

Human papillomaviruse causes cutaneous warts and generally infect the children and young adults. Different therapies exist for warts but each of these treatments has its own limitation. So finding new way of therapy without side effects is recommended. In this study 22-year –old man with common warts on hallux (medial side of distal phalanx) of left foot underwent topical application of fig tree latex one drop/wart daily for ten subsequent days . 24 days after the initiation of fig tree latex application, absence of wart reported. In conclusion, fig tree latex has pharmacological potential for local treatment of warts.

**Keywords:** *Ficus carica* latex, Warts, *Verruca vulgaris*.

### Introduction

Cutaneous warts are caused by human papillomaviruse and generally affect the children and young adults. Cutaneous warts are usually asymptomatic but can be problematic for poor cosmetic appearance, disability and pain.<sup>1</sup> There are different remedies on warts but each of these therapies has its own limitation like laser and cryotherapy which are painful and expensive. Prescriptions of drugs such as bleomycin and imiquimod have been showed to have side effect. Using surgical procedure may lead to bleeding, pain and scar formation.<sup>1</sup> Application of salicylic acid may cause local irritation and desquamation.<sup>2</sup> In Iranian traditional medicine fig (*Ficus carica*) tree latex had been used for local treatment of warts which was reported by Avicenna in his 10th century book Canon of Medicine.<sup>3</sup> Therapeutic effect of fig tree latex (a milky excrete of leaves and fruits of the common fig tree so called “ficin”) is a subject of investigations and controversy. In this study, our challenge was to establish a useful and noninvasive treatment by fig tree latex for proposes of curing warts.

### Case Report

A 22-year –old man presented with common warts (*Verruca vulgaris*) on hallux (medial side of distal phalanx) of left foot underwent topical application of fig tree latex. We collected latex from fig trees drop-by-drop through cutting young leaves of fig tree and applied it on wart one drop/wart daily for ten subsequent days. Follow up examinations were performed by a dermatologist. On day 24 from the initiation of fig tree latex application, absence of wart reported. In our study recurrence of wart was not observed in 6 month after therapy.

## Discussion

Plants and herbals as natural products were noted to have anti-cancer effects and even play an important role in the efficacy of chemotherapy.<sup>4, 5</sup> Fig (*Ficus carica*) tree latex is known in Iranian traditional medicine reported by Avicenna in his 10th century book Canon of Medicine<sup>3</sup> for the treatment of warts and papillomatosis.<sup>6</sup> It has been revealed that fig tree latex has various therapeutic effects including hypoglycemic induction<sup>7</sup>, cancer suppression<sup>8</sup> and anti-helminthic effects<sup>9</sup>. The exact mechanisms and methods of treatment of latex on warts are not fully understood but it seems proteolytic activity of latex may be the cause of such effects. Our previous studies<sup>10, 11</sup> revealed that *Ficus carica* latex has anticancer effects in vitro and kills the cancerous cells without hazardous effects on normal peripheral blood mononuclear cells. It is reasonable to consider that fig tree latex has pharmacological potential for neoplasm treatment.

## Conclusion

The current study provided evidence that *Ficus carica* latex could be a source of treatment in dermal warts and diseases.

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