

**A Comparative Study of Efficacy and Safety of Intralesional Injections of Vitamin D3, MMR Vaccine and Acyclovir in Management of Cutaneous Warts**<sup>1</sup>Dr. Nupur Priya, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur.<sup>2</sup>Dr. Sachin Agarwal, Professor and Head, NCR Institute of Medical Sciences, Meerut.<sup>3</sup>Dr. Deepti Saxena, Associate Professor, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur.<sup>4</sup>Dr. Chirag Chadha, Associate Professor, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur.<sup>5</sup>Dr. Rishabh Raj, Assistant Professor, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur.**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Nupur Priya, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur.**How to citation this article:** Dr. Nupur Priya, Dr. Sachin Agarwal, Dr. Deepti Saxena, Dr. Chirag Chadha, Dr. Rishabh Raj, “A Comparative Study of Efficacy and Safety of Intralesional Injections of Vitamin D3, MMR Vaccine and Acyclovir in Management of Cutaneous Warts”, IJMACR- June - 2025, Volume – 8, Issue - 3, P. No. 92 – 102.**Open Access Article:** © 2025 Dr. Nupur Priya, et al. This is an open access journal and article distributed under the terms of the creative common's attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>). Which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.**Type of Publication:** Original Research Article**Conflicts of Interest:** Nil**Abstract**

Cutaneous warts, caused by human papillomavirus, are common benign skin lesions with various treatment options, including immunotherapy, which has gained attention for its ability to stimulate cell-mediated immunity and promote wart clearance. This study compared the efficacy and safety of intralesional injections of Vitamin D3, MMR vaccine, and acyclovir in the management of verruca vulgaris. A total of 105 patients were divided into three groups, each receiving intralesional injections of one of the treatments at two-week intervals, with a maximum of three sessions. The results showed that while initial improvements after the first session were comparable across all groups, significant differences emerged after the final session. The MMR group demonstrated superior efficacy, with

57.14% of patients achieving excellent improvement, compared to 28.57% in the Vitamin D3 group and 42.85% in the acyclovir group ( $p=0.00105$ ). Additionally, the MMR group had the lowest proportion of patients with no improvement (11.42%), compared to the Vitamin D3 group (20%) and the acyclovir group (57.1%) ( $p=0.0045$ ). Safety profiles also favored the MMR vaccine, which showed fewer adverse effects compared to Vitamin D3 and acyclovir. The findings suggest that intralesional MMR is a more effective and safer treatment option for cutaneous warts than intralesional Vitamin D3 or acyclovir. This supports the growing evidence for immunotherapy as a promising approach in managing cutaneous warts.

**Keywords:** Cutaneous Warts, Intralesional Injections, Human Papillomavirus, MMR, Acyclovir, Vitamin D3

## Introduction

Warts are verrucous, exophytic lesions caused by human papillomaviruses (HPVs) that infect basal keratinocytes through disrupted epithelial barriers. Various subtypes, such as common warts (*verruca vulgaris*), flat warts (*verruca plana*), filiform warts (*verruca filiformis*), and genital warts (*condyloma acuminatum*), arise from specific HPV types, including 1, 2, 4, 27, 57, and 63. Infected keratinocytes proliferate abnormally within the epidermis, forming thickened, warty papules, often on trauma-prone areas where epithelial barriers are more susceptible to viral entry. Affecting approximately 10% of the population, warts are a prevalent dermatological complaint, particularly in children and humid climates like India, where transmission is facilitated by moisture. Epidemiological studies highlight their significant presence in pediatric populations and the male predominance among affected individuals.

While largely benign, warts can cause discomfort, bleeding, and cosmetic concern, leading to frustration among patients. Their recurrence and resistance to treatment pose challenges for both patients and healthcare providers. Current treatments range from destructive methods like cryotherapy and surgery to immunotherapy and antiviral applications. However, many traditional treatments are associated with tissue damage, higher recurrence rates, and inconvenience due to frequent medical visits. Home remedies, such as duct tape therapy, are also less effective.

Emerging therapies, particularly intralesional approaches, have shown promise in treating recalcitrant warts, especially in challenging regions like palmoplantar and periungual areas. Intralesional immunotherapies, such as bleomycin, PPD, and

*C. albicans* antigen, enhance systemic immune responses, enabling the clearance of warts at both treated and distant sites. These methods have demonstrated shorter treatment durations, higher efficacy, and reduced side effects and recurrence rates compared to conventional therapies.

Recent interest has focused on intralesional injections of Vitamin D3, MMR vaccine, and acyclovir for wart management. The MMR vaccine, universally available and cost-effective, stimulates immune responses against HPV. Acyclovir, known for its efficacy against DNA viruses, is being explored for its potential in wart treatment. Vitamin D derivatives regulate epidermal cell proliferation and cytokine production, enhancing antimicrobial peptide expression. Despite their potential, no FDA-approved treatment or consensus exists regarding the most effective intralesional therapy. This study was designed to compare the efficacy and safety of intralesional injections of Vitamin D3, MMR vaccine, and acyclovir in the management of cutaneous warts, addressing the need for a reliable, effective, and patient-friendly treatment option.

## Methodology

A prospective study was conducted between March 2022 and February 2025 to evaluate the efficacy and safety of intralesional Vitamin D3, acyclovir, and MMR vaccine in the treatment of cutaneous warts. A total of 105 patients diagnosed with cutaneous warts at the Dermatology Department of Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital were included. Each treatment group comprised 35 patients: Group A received intralesional Vitamin D3, Group B received intralesional acyclovir, and Group C received intralesional MMR vaccine.

Patients were eligible if they had clinically diagnosed warts without prior treatment for at least six months, were aged between 14 and 55, and provided informed consent. Exclusion criteria included secondary infections, pregnancy or lactation, keloidal tendency, immunosuppression, hypersensitivity to intralesional injections, relevant medical conditions (e.g., meningitis, asthma, hypervitaminosis D), and anogenital warts. Diagnosis was based on clinical history and characteristics, with demographic and clinical data recorded using a structured questionnaire during the baseline visit.

Intralesional Vitamin D3 was administered as 0.2 ml of cholecalciferol (15 mg/ml) injected into the base of each wart after pre-administration of 0.2 ml lignocaine. Intralesional acyclovir was prepared by diluting a 250 mg vial with saline to achieve a 70 mg/ml solution, and 0.1 ml was injected into each wart. For MMR vaccine, 0.5 ml was injected into the largest wart. Treatments were repeated bi-weekly for up to three sessions, and patients were instructed to avoid topical or oral therapies during the treatment period. Follow-up assessments were conducted every two weeks for the first two months and monthly thereafter, with evaluations for therapeutic response, recurrence, and adverse effects extending six months post-treatment.

Efficacy outcomes were categorized as excellent (>75% reduction in wart size and lesion count), moderate (50–74%), mild (25–49%), or no response (<25%). Data were analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 29.0. Quantitative variables were expressed as mean  $\pm$  standard deviation, and qualitative variables as counts or percentages. Differences between groups were assessed using Chi-square and One-Way ANOVA tests, with Tukey's HSD post hoc test applied for pairwise

comparisons. Statistical significance was set at  $P < 0.05$ . This study aimed to provide a comparative evaluation of the three intralesional therapies, offering insights into optimal management strategies for cutaneous warts.

## Results

The age distribution across the treatment groups revealed the following mean ages: 28.54 years for Group A (Vitamin D3), 32.26 years for Group B (Acyclovir), and 30.89 years for Group C (MMR Vaccine). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed no statistically significant difference in age between the groups, as indicated by the p-value of 0.1784 (Table 1).

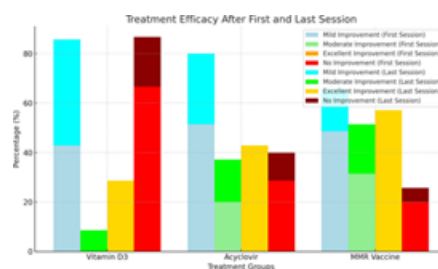


Fig. 1: The treatment efficacy after the first and last session

The gender distribution across the groups was also assessed. In Group A (Vitamin D3), 57.14% of the participants were male, and 42.86% were female. Group B (Acyclovir) had a slightly higher proportion of males (62.86%) compared to females (37.14%). Group C (MMR Vaccine) had a gender distribution of 60% male and 40% female. The Chi-square test revealed no significant difference in the gender distribution across the groups ( $p = 0.821$ ) (Table 2).

Clinical characteristics of the warts, including the number and size of warts, were also compared. The median number of warts in Group A (Vitamin D3), Group B (Acyclovir), and Group C (MMR Vaccine) was 2, with interquartile ranges (IQR) of 1–3, 1–4, and 1–5, respectively. The median wart size was 4 mm in all groups, with IQRs ranging from 3 to 5 mm.

Statistical analysis showed no significant differences in the number ( $p = 0.2498$ ) or size ( $p = 0.1794$ ) of warts across the treatment groups (Table 3).

In terms of treatment efficacy, after the first session, the majority of participants in all groups reported no improvement. Group A (Vitamin D3) showed that 66.67% of participants experienced no improvement. A higher percentage of participants in Group B (Acyclovir) and Group C (MMR Vaccine) showed moderate improvement (20% and 31.42%, respectively). The Kruskal-Wallis test indicated no significant difference in treatment efficacy after the first session ( $p = 0.175$ ) (Table 4).

However, after the final session, significant improvements were observed across the groups. In Group A (Vitamin D3), 42.85% of participants reported mild improvement, 8.57% reported moderate

improvement, and 28.57% reported excellent improvement, with a statistically significant p-value of 0.00105. In Group B (Acyclovir), 42.85% of participants showed excellent improvement, while Group C (MMR Vaccine) had the highest proportion of participants showing excellent improvement (57.14%). These differences in treatment efficacy after the final session were statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.00105 (Table 4).

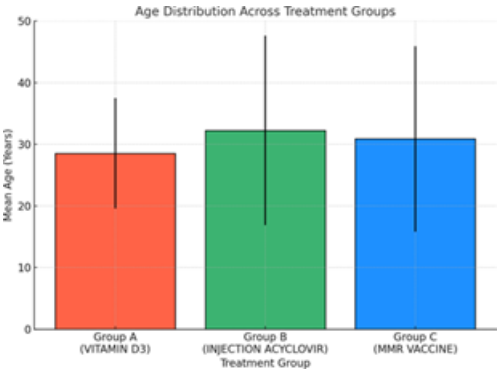


Figure 2: Age Distribution

Table 1: Age Distribution Across Treatment Groups

| Treatment Group      | Mean Age (Years) | Standard Deviation (Years) | P-value (ANOVA) |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Group A: Vitamin D3  | 28.54            | 8.95                       | 0.1784          |
| Group B: Acyclovir   | 32.26            | 15.39                      |                 |
| Group C: MMR Vaccine | 30.89            | 15.06                      |                 |

Table 2: Gender Distribution Across Treatment Groups

| Treatment Group      | Male Count (%) | Female Count (%) | P-value (Chi-Square Test) |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Group A: Vitamin D3  | 20 (57.14%)    | 15 (42.86%)      | 0.821                     |
| Group B: Acyclovir   | 22 (62.86%)    | 13 (37.14%)      |                           |
| Group C: MMR Vaccine | 21 (60.00%)    | 14 (40.00%)      |                           |

Table 3: Clinical Characteristics of Warts Across Groups

| Clinical Parameter              | Group A: Vitamin D3 | Group B: Acyclovir | Group C: MMR Vaccine | P-value |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Number of Warts (Median, IQR)   | 2 (1–3)             | 2 (1–4)            | 2 (1–5)              | 0.2498  |
| Size of Warts (mm, Median, IQR) | 4 (3–5)             | 4 (3–5)            | 4 (3–5)              | 0.1794  |

Table 4: Treatment Efficacy after First and Last Session

| Treatment Group      | Mild Improvement (%) | Moderate Improvement (%) | Excellent Improvement (%) | No Improvement (%) | P-value (Kruskal-Wallis Test) |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| After First Session  |                      |                          |                           |                    |                               |
| Group A: Vitamin D3  | 42.85                | 0                        | 0                         | 66.67              | 0.175                         |
| Group B: Acyclovir   | 51.42                | 20.00                    | 0                         | 28.57              |                               |
| Group C: MMR Vaccine | 48.57                | 31.42                    | 0                         | 20.00              |                               |
| After Last Session   |                      |                          |                           |                    |                               |
| Group A: Vitamin D3  | 42.85                | 8.57                     | 28.57                     | 20.00              | 0.00105**                     |
| Group B: Acyclovir   | 28.57                | 17.14                    | 42.85                     | 11.42              |                               |
| Group C: MMR Vaccine | 17.14                | 20.00                    | 57.14                     | 5.71               |                               |

Discussion

In our study, 57.14% of patients in the MMR vaccine group showed a complete response, followed by 42.85% in the acyclovir group and 28.57% in the vitamin D group. These results are consistent with Alkady et al. (2023), who found MMR, vitamin D3, and bleomycin significantly more effective than a control group, although no significant differences were noted between these treatments. Joshi et al. (2023) compared MMR vaccine and vitamin D3 for treating multiple warts and found vitamin D3 more effective for filiform warts, while the efficacy for other wart types was similar. Both treatments were equally effective in clearing distant warts. Acyclovir, as documented in studies by Meghana Reddy (2023) and Elsayed et al. (2021), was highly effective in wart resolution, though side effects like pain and burning sensations were reported. These findings contrast with Alkady et al., whose study showed better therapeutic responses for MMR and vitamin D3 compared to acyclovir.

In studies by Nofal et al. (2015) and Naseem (2013), MMR vaccination demonstrated high rates of complete clearance, especially for distant warts. This corresponds

with our finding that MMR was more effective for treating the target wart but similarly effective in clearing distant warts. Agrawal et al. (2025) also reported positive outcomes with acyclovir, particularly for palmoplantar warts. Notably, intralesional MMR and vitamin D3 therapies generally exhibited good safety profiles, with mild, transient side effects, which aligns with our observations.

The mechanisms underlying the effectiveness of these treatments are varied. MMR may stimulate a systemic immune response, while vitamin D3 appears to modulate cytokine production, enhancing the immune function in the skin. Acyclovir, conversely, acts by targeting viral replication via its interaction with herpesvirus DNA. Vitamin D3’s role in immune modulation is particularly interesting, as it can enhance T-cell responses, possibly aiding in the clearance of warts by boosting local immunity.

Regarding safety, MMR exhibited a higher safety profile than both acyclovir and vitamin D3, with fewer side effects overall. However, pain and blistering were common side effects across all treatments. These adverse effects were mild and transient, and no serious long-term

complications were reported, reinforcing the safety of these therapies in managing warts.

Despite these promising findings, the study does have several limitations. The relatively small sample size and short follow-up period prevent the drawing of definitive conclusions regarding the long-term efficacy and recurrence of warts. A larger sample size and extended follow-up would provide more robust data on the sustained effects of these treatments. Additionally, the absence of a placebo group limits our ability to fully isolate the therapeutic effects of the intralesional treatments from potential placebo effects, suggesting that future studies could benefit from a more rigorously controlled design.

### Conclusion

Intralesional MMR vaccine injections demonstrated superior efficacy in the treatment of cutaneous warts compared to acyclovir and Vitamin D3, achieving the highest rates of complete clearance and minimal recurrence. The favorable safety profile and minimal side effects of the MMR vaccine highlight its potential as a promising therapeutic option. While acyclovir and Vitamin D3 also showed effectiveness, particularly in certain patient subgroups, their response rates were lower. Given the psychological and social impact of warts, the selection of treatment should carefully consider both efficacy and the side effect profile. Further studies with larger sample sizes and extended follow-up periods are recommended to confirm these findings and assess long-term outcomes.

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