

# UNDERSTANDING SHINGLES

## What is shingles?

Shingles is a disease caused by the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. After a person recovers from chickenpox, the virus stays dormant (inactive) in the body. The virus can reactivate years later, causing shingles. People who were vaccinated for chickenpox can also get shingles.

An estimated 1 million cases of shingles occur annually in the United States. Your risk for shingles increases as you age, or if your immune system becomes compromised.



Nearly 1 in 3 Americans will get shingles in their lifetime.

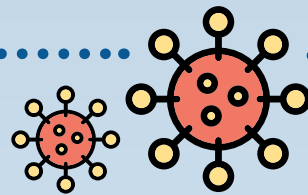
## SYMPTOMS

The most common symptoms of shingles are pain, itching or tingling of the skin, followed by a painful rash of blister-like sores, which may occur on one side of the body – often on the face or torso. Additional signs and symptoms include fever, headache, chills, and upset stomach.



Painful  
Rash

## SHINGLES CAN HAVE



Varicella  
Zoster Virus



Chickenpox  
Illness and  
Recovery

YEARS GO BY ...

Virus Reactivates and Shingles Occurs

## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

### Post-Herptic Neuralgia

Pain persisting after the rash has healed, which may last weeks, months or even years



### Cardiovascular Problems

Examples: heart attack, stroke



### Neurologic Problems

Examples: Bell's palsy, encephalitis



### Vision Loss

Herpes Zoster Ophthalmicus



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2019). About Shingles (Herpes Zoster). Accessed October 14, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/shingles/about/index.html>

# SHINGLES VACCINATION



## Should I get vaccinated for shingles?

The only shingles vaccine currently available in the United States is Shingrix (recombinant zoster vaccine). A different type of shingles vaccine called Zostavax (zoster vaccine live) was removed from the market in November 2020.

Vaccination to prevent shingles and related complications is recommended in adults 50 years and older. Shingrix is also recommended for adults 19 years and older who have weakened immune systems because of disease or therapy.

### You should get Shingrix even if you:

- Are getting another compatible vaccine today (e.g., COVID-19, flu, etc.).
- Have had shingles.
- Received Zostavax in the past.
- Received varicella (chickenpox) vaccine.

## What should I know about Shingrix?

Shingrix is administered in two doses, separated by two to six months. People with weakened immune systems may receive the doses one to two months apart.

**2** Doses

Separated by two to six months

Shingrix provides strong protection against shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia. In adults 50 years and older who have healthy immune systems, Shingrix is more than 90% effective at preventing shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia. In adults with weakened immune systems, studies show that Shingrix is 68%-91% effective in preventing shingles, depending on the condition that affects the immune system.



**90%** Efficacy against shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia

Do you have a weakened immune system?

NO

YES



**50** years old or older?

**19** years old or older?

YES

YES

**Vaccination may be recommended.** Check with your health care provider or pharmacist for information tailored to you.

NO

NO

You do not need to be vaccinated for shingles at this time.

## SHINGRIX SIDE EFFECTS

Shingrix causes a strong immune response, so some short-term side effects may occur. These side effects are expected and usually go away on their own in two or three days.

- Pain at injection site.
- Tiredness.
- Headache.
- Fever.
- Shivering.
- Muscle pain.
- Nausea.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2022). Shingles Vaccination. Accessed October 14, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/shingles/public/shingrix/index.html>