

THE SHINGLES VACCINE

What does the Vaccine do?

The Shingles vaccine reduces the risk of getting shingles and PHN. Even if you do develop the disease, symptoms may be less severe.

How effective is the Vaccine?

The shingles vaccine can significantly reduce your risk of developing shingles. If you do develop shingles after taking the vaccine, the symptoms may be milder and the duration of the illness shorter.

How is the vaccination administered?

The shingles vaccine is administered in your upper arm.

How often is vaccine needed?

You only need it once and you do not need to be revaccinated.

Will there be any side-effects of the vaccine?

Side-effects of the vaccine are usually mild and short-lasting. The most common side-effects are headache; and redness, pain, itching, warmth, swelling and bruising at the injection site. If the side-effects persist, you should contact your GP or practice nurse.

How safe is the vaccine?

The shingles vaccine has been thoroughly tested and meets UK and European safety licensing requirements.

Who will get the Vaccine?

The vaccine will be given to all persons during their 70th birthday year. In addition, persons between the ages of 71-79 will also be offered the vaccine, phased over the next 10 years.

How can I request the vaccine?

Your GP will need to refer you for the vaccine. You can ask at your next scheduled appointment.



For further information,
please contact your
GP at the
Primary Care Centre
on 20052441



Shingles



Shingles is a painful and unpleasant disease that affects older people more.

There is now a vaccine that can reduce your risk of getting shingles or reduce the severity of its symptoms should you develop the disease

This leaflet describes Shingles and the benefits of getting immunised against it.

What is Shingles?

Most people would have had chickenpox during childhood and some will not be aware that they have had it. If you have had chicken pox, the virus that caused it can stay in your body for the rest of your life. Sometimes, the virus reactivates when you are older and causes a disease called shingles.



The scientific name for the disease is 'herpes zoster' and the chicken pox virus is called 'varicella zoster' virus.

What does it do?

The shingles virus affects the nerves in the skin resulting in clusters of painful, itchy fluid-filled blisters. These blisters eventually burst and turn into sores before they heal. The blisters usually affect an area on one side of the body and are most commonly found on the chest, head, face and eye. Shingles can be very painful and in some people, the pain can last for many years. And the older you are, the worse it can be.

How do you catch Shingles?

You do not catch shingles. Chicken pox caught earlier in your life can become reactivated later to cause shingles. You cannot catch shingles from someone who has chicken pox. However, if you have shingles blisters, the virus in the fluid can infect someone who has not had chicken pox and they may develop chicken pox.



How common is Shingles?

About 20% of people who have had chicken pox develop shingles. Shingles tends to affect people more as they get older. It is more common in people aged over 70 years and in some cases the affected people may need to be admitted to hospital.

How long does it last?

The rash usually presents a few days after the initial pain and tingling and lasts for approximately a week.

How serious is Shingles?

Most people recover completely from Shingles.

But in some cases, the pain and discomfort can last much longer and this is more likely in older people.

Sometimes the eyelid can become infected causing severe pain, decreased vision and even permanent blindness in the affected eye.

About one-fifth of the cases develop a condition called 'post-herpetic neuralgia' ("PHN"), in which the pain is extremely unpleasant with severe burning, throbbing or stabbing sensations and can last for several months or years.

