

How is shingles treated?

Treatment of shingles often includes a combination of antiviral and pain-relieving medications. The shingles vaccine cannot be used to treat existing shingles or the pain related to existing shingles.

- Antiviral medications help to stop the virus from spreading, speed healing of skin lesions, and reduce the duration and severity of pain. They are most effective when started within 72 hours of when the shingles rash first appears.
- Pain-relieving medications reduce pain related to shingles and *post-herpetic neuralgia* (nerve pain after shingles), which can be severe.

Additionally, it is important to keep the affected area clean and dry to prevent a bacterial infection.

When should I see my doctor?

If you're experiencing shingles symptoms (itching, burning, or tingling sensations; painful rash or blisters), speak to your doctor right away. Medications that treat shingles are most effective when started early.

What is the role of my Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist?

If you have questions about shingles or the shingles vaccine, speak to your Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist and they'll be happy to answer all of your questions. Your Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist may be able to administer the vaccine right in the pharmacy.*

*Professional Fees may apply. Check with your Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist about vaccination procedures.

Your health. Made easier.™

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Could you be at risk for shingles?

If you've had chickenpox
and are over 50,
the answer is yes.

Find out if
the shingles
vaccine is
right for you.



SHOPPERS
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What is shingles?

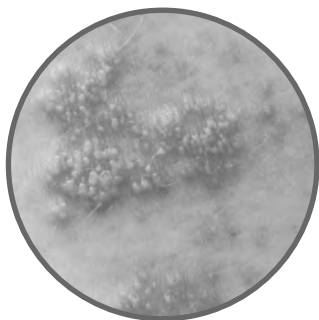
Shingles is a viral infection of the nerves that causes inflammation and severe pain. It is accompanied by a rash on one side of the body, often in a band or belt-like pattern.

The most common area to be affected by shingles is the skin on the chest or abdomen. Shingles can also appear on the upper face, and sometimes on other parts of the body. Shingles is caused by varicella zoster, the same virus that causes chickenpox. If you have had chickenpox, the virus is lying dormant in your body. At any time, the virus can become active again and cause shingles.

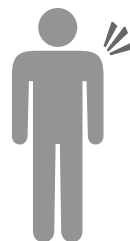
What are the symptoms and complications of shingles?

Shingles begins with **itching, burning, and tingling** of the skin. Within 1 to 2 days, intense **nerve pain** sets in along with **rash** and **blisters**. The blisters scab over in 7 to 10 days. For many people, the rash will disappear within 3 to 4 weeks. The pain starts to decrease as the rash goes away, but it can last longer.

For some people, shingles can cause long-term, severe complications:



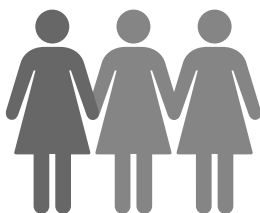
- Approximately 10% to 15% of people will develop **nerve pain** that lasts for months or even years. The pain can be excruciating, disrupt sleep, trigger anxiety and depression, and result in a loss of mobility and independence.



- The sores of shingles can become **infected** and delay healing.
- Approximately 2% of people will experience **blurry vision, headache** and **eye pain**. If not promptly treated, this can lead to vision loss.

Who is at risk of shingles?

Up to 1 in 3 people will develop shingles during their lifetime. If you have had chickenpox, you can develop shingles. You may have had a mild case of chickenpox and not even realized it.



You're at increased risk if you are over the age of 50 or if you have a weakened immune system. Your risk increases with age and declining health.

How can you protect yourself from shingles?

There are two vaccines (Shingrix and Zostavax II) that are proven to reduce occurrence of shingles. The vaccine does not guarantee you won't get it; some people may still develop shingles. In these cases, the vaccine may help reduce the intensity and duration of pain.

Who should get the shingles vaccine?

The shingles vaccine is recommended for most adults over 50 years of age. You may want to get the vaccine even if you're unsure if you've had chickenpox. That's because 90% of Canadian adults have the varicella zoster virus in their body, even though some of them may have never had symptoms of chickenpox.

The Zostavax II vaccine is not recommended for people with a weakened immune system, pregnant women or people with a history of a severe allergic reaction to gelatin or neomycin.

The Shingrix vaccine is not recommended for people with a hypersensitivity to any component of the formulation.

Your Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist or a doctor can answer your questions and help you decide if the vaccine is right for you.



Is shingles infectious?

You cannot directly catch shingles from another person. However, if someone has never had chickenpox, exposure to the virus might cause them to develop chickenpox, as both conditions are caused by the same virus. The virus can be spread through direct contact with fluid from the rash blisters caused by shingles. A person with active shingles can spread the virus when the rash is in the blister-phase.