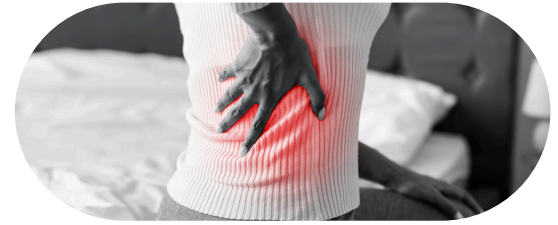


What is Shingles?

Shingles is a nerve infection that often appears as a painful skin rash on the torso or face. A shingles infection can last for several weeks, and can lead to long-lasting health impacts like **vision loss, nerve damage, chronic pain and scarring**.



What causes Shingles?

Shingles is caused by a virus called varicella zoster, which is the same virus that causes chickenpox infections. After a person has had chicken pox, or the chicken pox vaccine, the virus lives dormant in their body. Unfortunately, when a person has a weakened immune system (e.g., due to age, stress levels, health conditions, certain medications), the virus can re-activate and lead to a shingles infection.

What are the signs and symptoms of Shingles?

Shingles has several warning signs that appear before the rash appears in a pattern along one side of the torso or face. If caught early, doctors may be able to prescribe an anti-viral medication to stop the rash from worsening.

Common early signs include:

- Skin sensitivity
- Itching
- Tingling
- Red bumpy rash
- Pain
- Fluid-filled blisters

Other symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headache

Who is at highest risk for Shingles?



Adults (50+)



People with
weakened immune
systems



People under
high stress
levels

What are the Shingles Vaccine guidelines?

Shingles infections can be prevented by vaccination. The vaccine is recommended for anyone **over the age of 50**, or anyone **over the age of 18 with a weakened immune system**. People who are at an increased risk for shingles should speak to their healthcare provider about getting the vaccine.

Some provinces and territories cover the cost of this vaccine through public vaccine programs. Those who do not qualify for publicly funded vaccines may be covered through their employee benefits plans.



Vaccination remains one of the best ways to safeguard yourself from preventable diseases, reduce the risk of serious illness and complications and prevent the spread of disease to others. Talk to your healthcare provider to learn more about how vaccination can support you and your families health and wellness.