

Shingles

Shingles is a disease caused by the reactivation of chickenpox virus.

The Disease

Common Symptoms



Most common symptoms of shingles:

- Rash
- Pain

The pain often lasts for weeks or months after the rash has healed. Known as "post-herpetic neuralgia" (PHN), some people experience pain caused by shingles for years after their episode.

How It Spreads

After a chickenpox infection, the virus lives silently in nerve cells. It can then reactivate when a person's immune system is weakened by age, illness or stress causing shingles. It can also spread to a person who is susceptible to chickenpox if they have direct contact with a rash that has not crusted over.



Check out some stories by individuals who experienced shingles:



The Vaccine

Reasons to get it:

- Anyone who has had chickenpox can get shingles.
- Shingles can cause long-term, debilitating pain.
- People can have shingles more than once.
- Contact with a shingles rash can cause chickenpox in someone who's never had chickenpox or the vaccine.
- The vaccine is safe and effective.



Who should get it?

People who are 50 years of age and older should receive two doses of the shingles vaccine, even if they previously received the older version (called Zostavax).