

# Shingles: What is it?

Shingles is a non-life-threatening but extremely uncomfortable viral infection that causes a painful rash that often looks like a stripe of blisters. Other symptoms include pain, sensitivity to touch, itching, fever, headaches, and fatigue. Antiviral and pain medications can reduce symptoms, but there is no actual cure. Complications can include staph infection, vision loss, Ramsay Hunt syndrome, and even stroke.

## Prevention

Receiving two doses of the shingles vaccine within two to six months of each other is an excellent way to protect yourself. The CDC recommends the vaccine for people over 50 or over 19 with weakened immune systems, regardless of whether you have had shingles, chickenpox, or the chickenpox vaccine before. The vaccine is more than 90% effective!

## Cost

Many health insurance plans will cover the shingles vaccine, but review your plan documents to confirm.



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