

The Shingles Vaccine – Should You Get It?

Shingles is a condition that is not any more prevalent during the winter, but cold dry air or the friction of clothing can certainly contribute to its misery. There is a vaccine for shingles – but do you know whether it would help you or not? Here are some of the pros and cons.

What causes shingles?

Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. The first time we get the virus, it presents as chickenpox and then stays dormant in our bodies, not really causing any problems. If it gets re-activated, as it may during periods of stress, it reoccurs as shingles.

What are the symptoms?

Shingles is a painful, blistering rash that lasts up to 30 days. The pain usually decreases as the rash heals, but some people experience long-term pain. Fluid-filled blisters appear as a band on one side of the body, usually wrapping the middle of the back around to one side of the chest. The neck, face or scalp can be involved, and some

individuals have shingles on their legs. Although the rash is caused by the chickenpox virus, there is less itching and more pain from the shingles blisters.

Who gets shingles?

People who have had chickenpox may get shingles. The chance of getting shingles increases substantially after age 60, but younger individuals can get it, too.

What is the treatment for shingles?

There is no treatment that gets rid of shingles. Some antiviral medications, like acyclovir and valacyclovir, may help shorten the duration of the rash and lessen the symptoms, but only if started within 72 hours of getting the first lesions.

Can you prevent shingles?

If you have had chickenpox, there is no foolproof way to prevent shingles. The shingles vaccine, Zostavax, decreases the chance of getting shingles and, if you do get it, the symptoms may be less severe.

So should I get the vaccine?

There are several things to consider:

- The vaccine does appear to decrease the severity of symptoms, so if you are prone to shingles outbreaks, you may experience less discomfort.
- Some people experienced minor side effects with the vaccine, including redness, pain and tenderness, swelling at the injection site, and headache.

How is the vaccine given?

The shingles vaccine is a one-time shot.

The shingles vaccine is an optional recommendation for those 60 and older. If you think you might benefit, talk with your doctor – he or she can help you look at your risk of shingles and weigh the pros and cons of the vaccine.



Jay Rice, RPh, FASCP, Vice President of Pharmacy Enterprises,
Wheaton Franciscan Southeast Wisconsin

If you are a patient of Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group and would like more information about getting the vaccine, please see the back of this flyer for details.



Wheaton Franciscan Pharmacy
In Partnership with the Felician Sisters

We Make It Convenient for Our Patients!

*If you are a patient of
Wheaton Franciscan Medical
Group and would like to receive the
Zostavax vaccine for shingles, talk
with your doctor.*

Your Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group physician will write the necessary orders for the vaccine. The staff of the medical office will handle authorization with your insurance provider and confirm your out-of-pocket costs.

You will receive a call to schedule an appointment.

You may return to your doctor's office for the vaccine, or you may choose to schedule an appointment at one of the convenient pharmacies listed below:

Tuesday, February 9

9am-1pm

Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare-Franklin
Pharmacy

10101 S. 27th St., Franklin

Tuesday, February 23

9am-1pm

Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare-Wauwatosa
Pharmacy

201 N. Mayfair Rd.,
Wauwatosa

Tuesday, April 13

9am-1pm

Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare-Elmbrook
Memorial Pharmacy

19333 W. North Ave.,
Brookfield

Tuesday, September 21

9am-1pm

Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare-St. Joseph
Pharmacy

5000 W. Chambers St.,
Milwaukee

Tuesday, September 28

9am-1pm

Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare-St. Francis
Pharmacy

3237 S. 16th St., Milwaukee

Please note: the Zostavax clinics are available only to patients of Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group. Appointments must be scheduled in advance through your WFMG clinic.