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# *Shingles Vaccine - Shingrix®*

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## ***What is shingles?***

- Shingles (herpes zoster) is a viral illness caused by reactivation of the chicken pox virus.
- The virus does not leave the body after chickenpox disease; it becomes inactive in the body's nerve cells.
- The virus can become active later in life; the cause is unknown and may occur years after chickenpox infection. Nearly 1 out of 3 persons will develop shingles.
- Shingles is more common in older adults, in children who had chickenpox before 2 years of age, and in people with a weakened immune system.
- A person who has never had chickenpox can get chickenpox from coming into direct contact with the fluid of a shingles blister.
- Shingles is not spread from person to person.

## ***What are the symptoms of Shingles?***

- Symptoms include tingling or itching followed by painful skin blisters on one side of the body.
- Shingles can lead to scarring, secondary bacterial infections, pneumonia, loss of hearing or vision, inflammation of the brain, and death.
- About 12% of those with shingles will experience a complication called post-herpetic neuralgia which involves burning, shooting or stabbing pain which can persist for months or even years.

## ***What does Shingrix® vaccine contain?***

- Non-live Varicella-zoster virus surface glycoprotein E, Quillaja saponaria Molina fraction 21 (QS-21), 3-O-desacyl-4'-monophosphoryl lipid A (MPL), cholesterol, dipotassium phosphate, dioleoyl phosphatidylcholine, disodium phosphate anhydrous, polysorbate 80, potassium dihydrogen phosphate, sodium chloride, sodium dihydrogen phosphate dihydrate, sucrose and water for injections.
- Does not contain latex

## ***How effective is Shingrix®?***

- Reduced the incidence of shingles by 97% in those over 50 years of age.
- Reduced the incidence of shingles by 91 % in those over 70 years of age.
- 88% effective in reducing the incidence of long-lasting and severe nerve pain associated with shingles in those over 70 years of age.

## ***How long does the protection last?***

- At least 4 years. Duration of protection beyond 4 years is unknown.
- The need for a booster is not currently established.

## ***Who should receive Shingrix® vaccine?***

- The vaccine is indicated for adults 50 years of age or over.
- Available only for purchase.



***Who should not receive Shingrix® vaccine?***

- Anyone who has had a life-threatening allergic reaction to the vaccine or any of its components.
- Persons under 50 years of age.
- Anyone with moderate to severe illness may have to delay immunization.
- Anyone who has had Zostavax® vaccine in the last 8 weeks.
- Anyone experiencing an episode of shingles should delay vaccination until the acute stage is over and symptoms are resolved.
- Shingrix is not indicated for prevention of primary varicella infection (chicken pox) or for the treatment of herpes zoster or postherpetic neuralgia.

***How is the vaccine given?***

- By injection into a muscle (preferably the deltoid).

***When is the vaccine given?***

- Requires two doses, given 2 to 6 months apart. It is important to receive both doses to ensure maximum efficacy and duration of protection.

***What might be felt after receiving the vaccine?***

- Most reactions are mild to moderate, and lasting up to 3 days.
- Soreness, redness or swelling at injection site.
- Headache, muscle pain, fatigue, chills, fever
- Stomach complaints (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and/or stomach pain).

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. **If this happens after you leave the clinic, call 911 or the local emergency number.** This reaction can be treated, and occurs in less than one in one million people who get the vaccine.

***Who should you report reactions to?***

- Report any adverse or unexpected reactions to your local public health nurse, doctor, nurse practitioner, or Healthline by calling 811 as soon as possible.
- For more information contact a Public Health Nurse at the Specialty Immunization and Travel Health Centre at 306-766-7904.

To ensure that a complete immunization record is maintained, every immunization administered to an individual will be documented by Public Health into the electronic provincial immunization registry, known as Panorama. Panorama is a secure electronic system used in Saskatchewan to record and manage immunization records and the health information related to immunization for all Saskatchewan residents. Immunization records may be shared with other health care professionals to provide public health services; assist with diagnosis and treatment; and to control the spread of vaccine preventable diseases. Information about Panorama is detailed in the “Protecting the Privacy of Your Immunization Record” fact sheet.

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*Specialty Immunization & Travel Health Center*  
**306-766-7904**

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