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# *Get ready for your shingles vaccination*

**If you get any side effects, report  
them to your nurse or doctor.**

Learn more at  
GSK's website:

**[GetShinglesReady.co.uk](https://www.getshinglesready.co.uk)**

# What is the Shingles National Immunisation Programme?

Vaccination to help protect against shingles is available for free to eligible individuals on the NHS. This programme is referred to as the Shingles National Immunisation Programme.

On 1st September 2023, the Shingles National Immunisation Programme changed, and more individuals are now eligible for a free shingles vaccination on the NHS.

You're now eligible if you're:

- **50 years and over with a severely weakened immune system (severely immunocompromised)**
  - Those aged 18-49 receiving a stem cell transplant may also be eligible. Speak to your specialist
- **Turning 65 years - you'll be eligible from your 65th birthday**
- **70-79 years old**

Those with a **severely** weakened immune system

If you are 50 years and over and have a medical condition or are taking prescribed medications associated with a severely weakened immune system, you may be eligible for a free shingles vaccination on the NHS. Individuals aged 18-49 years old receiving a stem cell transplant may also be eligible.

## Eligibility for the free NHS shingles vaccination

### How old are you?

<b>Eligible</b>	<b>50</b> <small>Years or older</small> with a severely weakened immune system* (severely immunocompromised) <b>You're eligible now</b>	<b>Turning 65</b> <b>You'll be eligible from your 65th birthday</b>	<b>70 to 79</b> <b>You're eligible now</b>
<b>Not eligible</b>	<b>Under 50</b> with a severely weakened immune system*	<b>Under 65</b> - you'll be eligible when you turn 65; Born before 1st Sept 1958 - you'll be eligible when you turn 70	<b>Over 80</b> without a severely weakened immune system

\*Those aged 18-49 receiving a stem cell transplant may also be eligible. Speak to your specialist.

**If you get any side effects, report them to your nurse or doctor.**

If you're still unsure about your eligibility or you want to learn more about shingles and the Shingles National Immunisation Programme, speak to your nurse or GP surgery.

You can also learn more at GSK's website: [GetShinglesReady.co.uk](https://www.getshinglesready.co.uk)

# What is shingles?

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Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is caused by the reactivation of the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox.

Following a chickenpox infection, which typically occurs in childhood, the varicella zoster virus remains dormant in the body for life, usually not causing any problems or symptoms. Our immune system naturally weakens over time as we age which may allow the usually inactive virus to reactivate, causing shingles.

Shingles can occur at any age but the risk, severity and complications increase with age. Individuals with severely weakened immune systems are at higher risk of shingles and its complications than those who do not. This is why vaccination is recommended at an earlier age group for these patients.

## Who is at risk?



**The risk of shingles increases with ageing and those with a weakened immune system<sup>1</sup>**



**9 in 10 adults in the UK are infected with the virus that causes shingles<sup>2</sup>**



**Anyone who has had chickenpox is at risk of developing shingles, with an estimated 1 in 4 lifetime risk of shingles<sup>3</sup>**

## What are the symptoms?

The first signs and symptoms of shingles can be a tingling or painful feeling in an area of skin, a headache or feeling generally unwell.

Typically, a blistering rash may appear a few days later, on one side of the body only.

The shingles rash most commonly appears on the chest or abdomen, but can appear anywhere on the body including the face.

It can take up to 4 weeks for the rash to heal. Usually, symptoms improve within weeks, however some patients suffer prolonged pain or other complications.

1. Johnson R et al. Ther Adv Vaccines. 2015; Vol. 3(4) 109–120.

2. DH Green Book Ch 34. Varicella. 2019.

3. DH Green Book Ch 28a. Shingles. 2023.