

Skeltons Chemists

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Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday - 8.30am - 3pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for November 2023

1. What is shingles?
2. What are the first signs?
3. Where does the rash appear?
4. What does the rash look like?
5. How long will the rash remain painful?
6. What do I do about it?
7. How can I treat it?
8. How long does shingles last?
9. Can I go to school or work while I have shingles?
10. Can people who have not had chickenpox catch it from me while I have shingles?

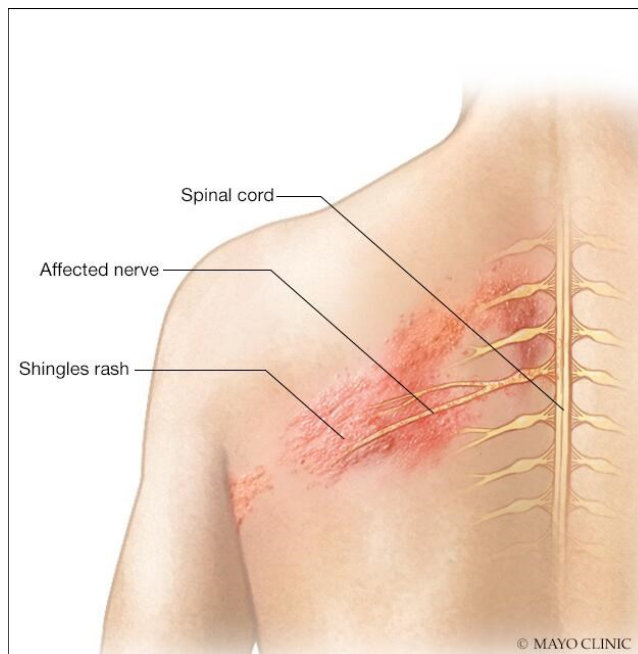


Answers on the bottom of P2

What is shingles?

Shingles is an infection that causes a painful rash. The first signs of shingles can be a tingling or painful feeling in an area of skin and/or a headache or generally feeling unwell. A rash will appear a few days later.

Usually, you get the shingle rash on your chest and tummy, but it can appear anywhere on your body including on your face, eyes and genitals. The rash appears as blotches on your skin, on one side of your body only. If you have a rash on both the left and right of your



body, it is unlikely to be shingles.

The blotches become itchy blisters that ooze fluid. A few days later, the blisters dry out and scab. The rash can be red, but this can be

harder to see on brown and black skin. The rash can form a cluster that only appears on one side of your body.

The rash may be in and around your eye, making it sore and red. It can affect your sight and hearing and make it hard to move one side of your face. It can take up to four weeks for the rash to heal but your skin can remain painful for weeks after the rash has gone, but it usually gets better over time.

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What should I do if I think I might have shingles?

Get advice from 111 as soon as you suspect shingles. You might need medicine to speed up your recovery and avoid longer lasting problems. This works best if it is taken within 3 days of your symptoms starting. 111 will tell you what to do. They can arrange a phone call from a nurse or doctor if you need one. Or you can ask your surgery for an urgent appointment yourself.

In the meantime you can:

- Take paracetamol for the pain
- Keep the rash clean and dry to reduce the risk of infection
- Wear loose fitting clothes
- Use a cool compress (a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel or a wet cloth)
- Do not let dressings or plasters stick to the rash.
- Do not use antibiotic cream because it slows healing.

You cannot give shingles to others but people who have not had chickenpox before could catch chickenpox from you. This is because shingles is caused by the chickenpox virus. It remains in the body after you have had chickenpox. It can be reactivated later and cause shingles if someone's immune system is lowered. This can be because of stress, certain conditions or treatments like chemotherapy.

The people you should try to avoid are pregnant women who have not had chickenpox before, anyone with a weakened immune system like someone having chemotherapy, and babies less than one month old unless you gave birth

to them, as your baby should be protected from the virus by your immune system.



Should I have the shingles vaccination?

The shingles vaccine helps protect against shingles. It's recommended for people at higher risk from shingles, including all adults turned 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system.

The vaccine helps to reduce your chances of getting shingles

and reducing your chances of getting serious problems if you do get shingles.

For people turning 65 on or after 1st

September

2023, you're eligible for the shingles vaccine.

You'll be offered 2 doses of the vaccine. These are given between 6 and 12 months apart.

If you turned 65 before 1st September 2023, you'll be eligible for the shingles vaccine when you turn 70. You will remain eligible until your 80th birthday. You'll also be eligible for the shingles vaccine if you're aged 50 or over and you're at higher risk from shingles because you have a severely weakened immune system.

This includes people with blood cancer, HIV or AIDs, who've recently had a stem cell transplant, radiotherapy, chemotherapy or an organ transplant and people taking certain medicines that severely weaken the immune system. They will be given 2 doses of the shingles vaccine between 8 weeks and 6 months apart. Ask your GP or care team if you're not sure if you're eligible for the shingles vaccine.



For more information on this or any other health concern you may have, contact one of our trained team.

Answers: Q1, It is an infection that causes a painful rash. Q2, A tingling or painful feeling in an area of skin and a headache or feeling generally unwell. Q3, It will usually appear a few days later on your chest and tummy but can appear anywhere on your body. Q4, It will appear as blotches on your skin on one side of your body only. Q5, Until it disappears. Q6, You should get advice from 111 or get an urgent GP appointment, as soon as you suspect shingles. Q7, Take paracetamol, keep the rash clean and dry, wear loose fitting clothes use a cool compress a few times a day. Q8, It can take up to 4 weeks for the rash to heal. Q9, Not if the rash is still oozing fluid and cannot be covered. Once it has dried out, you can return. Q10, Yes.