

SHINGLES VACCINE

A new vaccine to prevent shingles called **Zostavax** is now available at most area pharmacies.

Shingles, also called *herpes zoster* or *zoster*, is a painful skin rash caused by the varicella zoster virus, which is the same virus that causes chickenpox. After a person recovers from chickenpox, the virus stays in the body. Usually the virus does not cause any problems; however, the virus can reappear years later, causing shingles. Most cases of shingles occur in people over the age of 50.

Zostavax is a frozen vaccine so you will need to make an appointment in advance with the pharmacy. Adults over the age of 60 are encouraged to get the vaccine, regardless of whether they have ever had chickenpox or not. Even if you have had shingles before, the vaccine will help prevent future reoccurrences.

All Medicare Part D plans cover the shingles vaccine. The amount of cost-sharing (money *you* have to pay) for the vaccination varies.

Medicare Part B *does not* cover the shingles vaccine. If you have private insurance or Medicaid, your plan may or may not cover the vaccine; contact your insurer to find out.

Some people should not get this vaccine. There are certain restrictions and allergies that may prevent you from getting this vaccine.

For more detailed information, please go to the following website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/shingles/vac-faqs.htm>

To print out a fact sheet about the shingles vaccine, click here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-shingles.pdf>

For information in **other languages**, go to:

http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis_shingles.asp

For information in **Audio version**, go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm> and scroll down to Shingles (Herpes Zoster)