

# Common Questions about the Shingles Vaccine (Shingrix®)

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## **What is shingles?**

Shingles is a painful skin rash, often with blisters. A shingles rash usually appears on one side of the face or body and lasts for 2 to 4 weeks. The main symptom of shingles is pain, which can be quite severe. For about 1 person in 5, severe pain can continue even after the rash clears up.

## **Am I at risk for developing shingles?**

Shingles is caused by the varicella-zoster virus – the same virus that causes chickenpox. If you have had chickenpox, or received the chickenpox vaccine in the past, you are at risk for developing shingles. 98 out of 100 adults in the U.S. have had chickenpox.

## **What is the shingles vaccine and does it work?**

The shingles vaccine may prevent shingles or reduce the risk of prolonged pain associated with shingles. In clinical trials, two doses of the Shingrix vaccine prevented shingles in over 91 out of 100 people 50 years of age and older.

## **Should I receive the shingles vaccine?**

It is recommended that adults 50 years of age and older receive two doses of the shingles vaccine. The second dose should be given 2-6 months after the first dose. Talk with your doctor to determine whether to receive this vaccine.

## **Who should not receive the shingles vaccine or should wait to be vaccinated?**

Some people should not receive the vaccine. You should not get shingles vaccine if you:

- Have ever had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of shingles vaccine or have a severe allergy to any component of this vaccine. Ask your health care provider if you want information about vaccine components.

- Are pregnant, or think you might be pregnant. Women should avoid getting pregnant for at least 1 month after getting shingles vaccine.
- Have a weakened immune system due to disease (such as cancer or AIDS) or medical treatment (such as radiation, immunotherapy, high-dose steroids, or chemotherapy).
- Are moderately ill

If you have a fever greater than or equal to 101.3° F on the day of your shot, you will be asked to receive the vaccine at another time.

**Can I receive the shingles vaccine at my doctor's office?**

Yes, if your doctor prescribes the shingles vaccine for you, you may receive the shot at a University of Michigan primary care clinic.

**What is the cost of the shingles vaccine at a University of Michigan clinic?**

The cost of the shingles vaccine per dose is \$251 plus an administration fee of \$60. If you choose to receive the shingles vaccine through a University of Michigan clinic, you will be responsible for any cost not covered. If you do not have health insurance or pharmacy coverage for the vaccine, you may be able to receive the vaccine through your local county public health department for a small administrative fee or lower price. Eligibility guidelines, fees and vaccine availability differ by county. Please call your county health department to find out what's available to you:

Livingston County: (517) 546-9850

Washtenaw County: (734) 544-3066

Wayne County: (734) 727-7100

**Will my insurance cover the cost of the shingles vaccine?**

The best way to find out whether you have coverage for the vaccine is to contact your insurance company directly. Ask how much they will pay and how much you will have to pay out-of-pocket for this vaccine. Your insurer might ask you to provide the following codes: CPT-4 Codes: 90750 (vaccine) and 90471 (administration), diagnosis code V04.89 or V05.8.

The shingles vaccine and the administration is not covered by Medicare Part B. The vaccine is covered by most Medicare Part D pharmacy plans but coverage and co-pays vary. If you have Medicare Part D pharmacy coverage, you must have your Part D card available at the time of your visit so that your plan can be appropriately billed for the vaccine.

The following table may help you to understand coverage questions for your particular situation:

<b>Patients age 60-64:</b>	Many health plans are covering this vaccine but coverage will depend on your individual health insurance plan. Contact your insurance company to determine your coverage for the vaccine and administration fee.		
<b>Patients 50 and older with Medicare:</b>			
	<b>Medicare Part B only:</b>	<b>Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D Pharmacy Plan</b>	<b>Medicare Part B and Secondary Insurance</b>
<b>Shingles vaccine (\$251) plus Administration fee (\$60)</b>	No coverage	Coverage varies by Part D plan and current spending—contact your Part D plan to determine your coverage	Coverage depends on immunization benefit through your secondary insurance. Contact your insurer to determine coverage.
<b>Uninsured patients 60 and older:</b>	If you do not have insurance, you may pay out-of-pocket at the time of the visit or you may apply for coverage through the Merck Vaccine Assistance Program (a program sponsored by the vaccine manufacturer to assist patients). Please ask the patient representative at your clinic for application materials. We must receive approval from Merck before the vaccine is given.		

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