

Protect yourself against **Shingles**

A **FREE VACCINE** is now available
for people aged 70–79 years old

Your vaccinations don't stop at childhood.

It is important for adults to
be vaccinated too.

People aged 65 years and over are eligible
for other free vaccinations under the National
Immunisation Program including:

Pneumococcal vaccine which can reduce
your risk of pneumonia.

Influenza vaccine which is available from
Autumn each year to help protect you against
the flu virus.

Talk to
your doctor or
nurse about the
**FREE Shingles
VACCINE**

Shingles can be very
painful and lead to serious,
long-term complications.

For more information regarding immunisation, visit
immunise.health.gov.au or call the Immunise
Australia Information Line **1800 671 811**



Australian Government
Department of Health



An Australian, State and Territory
Government initiative



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What is shingles?

Shingles is a painful blistering rash caused by reactivation of the varicella zoster virus – the same virus that causes chickenpox.

Sometimes pain in the affected region can be severe and prolonged. When it lasts more than three months it is called post herpetic neuralgia.

Other complications may include scarring, skin infections, loss of vision or hearing, pneumonia and/or neurological complications.



Am I really at risk of shingles?

One in three people will develop shingles in their lifetime.

As a person gets older, the risk of getting shingles and neurological complications increases.

Who can have a free shingles vaccine?

All people aged 70 years old, with a five-year catch up program for people aged 71–79 years old until 31 October 2021.

Those who are not eligible for a free vaccine can purchase it with a prescription from their general practitioner or vaccination provider.

Where can I get the shingles vaccine?

The vaccine is available from November 2016 from your general practitioner or vaccination provider.

Vaccinations don't stop at childhood

Ask your general practitioner or vaccination provider about other free vaccines you may be eligible for.

If I've had shingles before should I still get vaccinated?

Discuss with your general practitioner or vaccination provider. Vaccination is still recommended for those who have had shingles infection in the past. However, you should wait at least a year between an episode of shingles and having the vaccine.

Is the vaccine safe?

The shingles vaccine is safe for most people aged 70–79 years of age, including those people with chronic diseases.

Certain people may be unable to have the vaccine, particularly those who have a very weakened immune system. Please speak with your general practitioner for advice.

The most common vaccine side effects occur around the injection site including redness, swelling and/or pain. Occasionally, headache, itching or a rash around the injection site may occur.

How many vaccine doses do I need?

A single dose of shingles vaccine is currently recommended.