

Shingles Vaccine: A New Choice

- Not available on the NHS
- A private service available to anyone over 50 years old (dependent upon a safety check)
- Provided by IOH Ltd.
- Complete course of vaccine and administration is £180

Shingles can occur to anyone who has had chickenpox. The risk increases as people get older. When shingles develop, a rash or blisters appear on the skin, generally on one side of the body. This is a sign that the virus, that has been dormant in the nerve cells, has reactivated and travelled from the nerves and followed a path out to the skin.

Because the nerves along the path become inflamed, shingles can also be painful. Pain that lasts for months after the rash has healed is called post herpetic neuralgia. For some people, this pain can be severe and chronic. Treatment relies upon treating the blistering and rash, and trying to find a combination of painkillers to make the symptoms bearable while the virus runs its course. Occasionally, antiviral treatment can reduce the duration of illness.

- 9 out of 10 adults have had chickenpox.
- Of these, 1 in 4 will get shingles
- Of these, 1 in 5 will get pain continuing after the rash

Shingles vaccine which has been shown to reduce the occurrence of shingles by half in a study of adults aged 60 and older who received it. The vaccine also reduced by two thirds the number of cases of shingles or post herpetic neuralgia and reduced the severity and duration of pain and discomfort associated with shingles, by more than half. Local reactions at the injection site were generally mild. It has just been made available in the UK.

PLEASE READ BEFORE VACCINATION

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have further questions please ask your nurse or doctor.
- If any of the side effects get serious, or if you notice any side effects not listed in this leaflet, please tell your nurse or doctor.

What is Shingles Vaccine

- It is a vaccine used to prevent shingles and shingles related long-lasting nerve pain that follows shingles.
- It is used to vaccinate individuals 50 years of age and over.
- It cannot be used to treat existing shingles or pain associated with existing shingles.

Before you receive the Vaccine

Do not receive the Vaccine if:

- If you are allergic to neomycin, sodium chloride or potassium.
- If you have a blood disorder or any type of cancer.
- If you have been told by your doctor that you have a weakened immune system as a result of disease, medicine or other treatment.

- If you have active untreated TB (tuberculosis).
- If you are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning on becoming pregnant in the next 3 months.

Please talk to the nurse or doctor:

- If you have or have had any medical problems and about any allergies.
- If you have a fever.
- If you have HIV infection.

As with many vaccines, the vaccine may not completely protect all persons who are vaccinated. The vaccine is injected under the skin, preferably in the upper arm and is given as a single dose.

Possible side effects

Like all medicines the vaccine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

Most common side effects occur at the injection site and they were:

- Redness
- Pain
- Swelling

Occurring only in at least 1 in 10 individuals.

Other commonly reported side effects were:

- Headache
- Itching
- Warmth
- Bruising

Occurring in less than 1 in 10 individuals.

Chickenpox was very rarely reported occurring in less than 1 of 10 000 individuals.

The following side effects have been reported in general use with the vaccine:

- Nausea
- Joint pain
- Muscle pain
- Fever
- Swollen glands in neck or arm pit
- Rash
- Rash at injection site
- Hives at injection site
- Allergic reaction affecting breathing and swallowing. If you have this type of allergic reaction call your doctor straight away or dial 999.

If any of these side effects get serious or if you notice any side effects not listed in this leaflet, please talk your doctor or nurse.

All the information taken from package leaflet provided by Sanofi Pasteur MSD.

For further information on shingles, please visit www.shinglesaware.co.uk.