

# Inactivated Shingles Vaccine

Vaccination,  
the best protection

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Vaccination is the best protection against shingles and its complications. Shingles only appears in people who have already contracted chicken pox (varicella). Shingles is the result of the chicken pox virus being reactivated, as if chicken pox developed in a nerve. Shingles occurs at any age, but more frequently among the elderly. You cannot catch shingles from someone who has it. You can, however, catch chicken pox by direct contact with a shingle's lesion.

Disease	Signs and symptoms	Possible complications
Shingles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Painful skin rash on one side of the body along the path of a nerve, lasting 2 to 3 weeks</li><li>• Skin rash and tiny blisters that break and form a crust in the painful area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scars</li><li>• Infected blisters</li><li>• Pain for several months along the path of the affected nerve (neuralgia)</li><li>• Impaired vision if the shingles affects the face</li><li>• Infection over the whole body</li><li>• Death</li></ul>

## The vaccine

Vaccination is the best protection against shingles and its complications. The inactivated vaccine is recommended for people age 60 and older. It is approximately 97% effective in preventing shingles, and this effectiveness is not reduced with age. When shingles occurs despite vaccination, the risk of neuralgia is reduced by 90%.

## Symptoms after vaccination

Some symptoms may be caused by the vaccine (e.g. redness at the injection site). Other problems may occur by chance and are not related to the vaccine (e.g. cold, gastro, headache).

In 17% of cases, reactions caused by the vaccine prevent normal everyday activity for 1 to 2 days. These reactions are less frequent in older people. They are a little more frequent after the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose.

Inactivated shingles vaccine is safe. Most reactions are harmless and do not last long.

Frequency	Possible reactions to the vaccine	What to do
In most cases (more than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain at the injection site</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply a cold, damp compress at the injection site.</li><li>• Use a medication for fever or discomfort if needed.</li><li>• See a doctor if symptoms are severe.</li></ul>
Very often (less than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redness and swelling at the injection site</li><li>• Muscle soreness, fatigue, headache, fever</li><li>• Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain</li></ul>	

We recommend that you stay at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after vaccination because allergic reactions may occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, the symptoms will appear a few minutes after the vaccination. The person giving the vaccine will be able to treat this reaction immediately.

**For any questions, contact the person giving the vaccine,  
or Info-Santé 8-1-1 or your doctor.**