



## ADULT VACCINATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

# OLDER WORKERS AND RETIREES SHOULD GET THE SHINGLES VACCINE

Over One Million Americans Likely To Contract Shingles This Year



### REDUCE YOUR RISK

**Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox.** The virus, called varicella zoster (VZV), stays in the body after causing chickenpox. If you have had chickenpox, then the virus is inside you. For reasons that are not fully known, the virus can reactivate years later and cause shingles in adults. And, while shingles itself is not contagious, an adult with shingles can transmit the VZV virus and give another person a case of chickenpox if the other person hasn't been vaccinated against chickenpox.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that nearly a third of Americans will develop shingles during their lifetimes. The risk of getting shingles increases with age. Most cases occur in people age 50 or older, with half of all cases at age 60 or older.\*

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Shingles can produce excruciating pain and other serious complications. It can also contribute to depression, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, loss of appetite and weight loss. **Yet only a small fraction of people over 60 have received the shingles vaccine.\*\*** The CDC says shingles vaccination coverage among adults is “unacceptably low.”

Shingles can also cause serious nerve pain. Shingles causes a painful, blistering skin rash that can last for weeks. It may lead to severe nerve pain that can last for months or even years after the rash goes away. This is called **postherpetic neuralgia, or PHN**, and is the most common complication of shingles. Older adults are more likely to get PHN.

**The only way to reduce your risk of developing shingles is to get vaccinated.** Your health care professional will determine if there is any reason you should not receive the vaccine. CDC recommends the vaccine for people age 60 and over. The vaccine has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for people age 50 and older. However, CDC has not made a recommendation for routine use in people 50-59 years old.

## GET VACCINATED

The only way to reduce your risk of developing shingles is to get vaccinated.

You should talk to your health care provider to find out if you are current on your vaccinations, and to your health care plan if you have questions about coverage for vaccinations.

**DON'T WAIT – VACCINATE!**

\* <http://www.cdc.gov/features/shingles/>

\*\* <http://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20130204adultvaccrates.html>

ALL-VAX provides multiemployer funds with tools to help raise awareness about the benefits of adult immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases. Go to [www.ALL-VAX.org](http://www.ALL-VAX.org). ALL-VAX is part of NCCMP's UNITED FOR HEALTHY LIVING CAMPAIGN.

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