



## HEALTH SERVICES BULLETIN



If you are a senior member age 60 or older this is important information for you. As you get older the risk of shingles and postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) increases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you get the Shingles vaccine. Many of you may have received Zostavax. But now there is a new vaccine called Shingrix licensed by the FDA in 2017. The CDC recommends that healthy adults 50 years of age or older get two doses of Shingrix, 2 to 6 months apart. Even if you have had Zostavax, it is recommended that you take Shingrix. Any questions you have about the Shingles vaccine should be addressed with your health care provider.

There are some people who should NOT take the Shingles vaccine. They are:

\*A person who has had a severe allergic reaction to gelatin, the antibiotic neomycin, or any other component of the Shingles vaccine

\*People with a weakened immune system because of:

1. HIV/AIDS or another immune system affecting disease
2. Treatment of the immune system with drugs such as steroids
3. Cancer treatment such as chemotherapy or radiation
4. Cancer affecting bone marrow or lymphatic system
5. Pregnant women. Women should not become pregnant for at least four weeks after receiving the vaccine.
6. If someone has a severe cold or illness, they should wait until they have fully recovered.

Like any vaccine some people could have a reaction. The CDC says the risk of serious harm or death is extremely low. So far, no serious problems have been identified with the Shingles vaccine. Mild side effects have been identified such as redness, soreness, swelling or itching at the injection site and about 1 in 70 have reported headaches.

As with any treatment or decisions to take a vaccine or not should rest with the patient and their health care provider after consultation.

If you have more questions you may be able to get answers on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. Always consult a trusted medical professional concerning your health and wellness.

Lt Col Gary Pickens  
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