



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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Are you protected? Shingles and the Shingles Vaccine

Kingsford and Iron River, Mich. – October 20, 2017. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the U.S., currently 1 million people get shingles every year, and about one out of every three people will get shingles in their lifetime.

Shingles, also known as zoster or herpes zoster, is a painful skin rash caused by the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. If you have had chickenpox, you are at risk of getting shingles.

How common is shingles? As you get older, you are more likely to get the disease. One out of every three people 60 years and older will get shingles. One out of six people older than 60 years who get shingles will have severe pain. The pain can last for months or even years. As people get older, they are more likely to develop long-term pain as a complication of shingles and the pain is likely to be more severe. Shingles can also lead to serious complication involving the eye. Very rarely, shingles can also lead to pneumonia, hearing problems, blindness, brain inflammation, or death.

The CDC recommends adults 60 years and older contact their healthcare professional about getting the one-time dose of the shingles vaccine. Clinical trials have shown in adults 60 years and older the vaccine reduced the risk of shingles by about half. Even if the vaccine does not prevent you from getting the shingles, it can still reduce the chance of having long-term pain. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov.

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department has shingles vaccines available and may bill private insurance, Michigan Medicaid, and Medicare Part D. Adults without health insurance or insurance benefits for immunizations may qualify to receive the shingles vaccine for only a \$15 administration fee.

For more information or to schedule appointments call the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department at 774-1868 or 265-9913.

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