



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# First Nations Health Benefits

# Shingles

Shingles is a painful blistering rash caused by a re-activation of the same virus that causes chicken pox. The pain of shingles can persist after the rash has healed – for weeks, months, or even longer. Shingles can occur in anyone who has had chickenpox; however, it is more common and more likely to cause complications and long-term effects in older people.

*“Shingles can be extremely painful and it is preventable. When it happens, treatment requires immediate medical care and antiviral drugs. Many First Nations Clients live in remote areas where it’s difficult to get this quick treatment. We also know that there are cultural safety issues with some of our Elders that impede them from seeking the urgent response this condition requires.”*

- Dr. Evan Adams, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Public Health, First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

## Who should get the Shingrix® vaccine?

- Coverage is available for eligible Health Benefits Clients (<https://www.fnha.ca/benefits/eligibility>) who are 60 years old and older.
- Vaccination against shingles is a preventative measure. It helps to reduce the risk of shingles- related complications and hospitalizations.
- Talk to your physician, nurse practitioner, pharmacist, or CHN about the risks and benefits of this vaccine.

## How do I access the Shingrix® vaccine?

- Shingrix® is available at your local pharmacy. Pharmacy providers can process the claim through Pacific Blue Cross for Clients who meet the eligibility criteria.
- You can pick up the vaccine from a pharmacy and can be injected by a pharmacist, community health nurse (CHN) or physician. It requires two doses, given 2-6 months apart, to be fully effective.

For additional questions, please call First Nations Health Benefits at 1-855-550-5454 or email [healthbenefits@fnha.ca](mailto:healthbenefits@fnha.ca)

## **Can Clients under 60 years old get the vaccine?**

Requests for exceptional coverage for Clients who do not meet the above criteria are reviewed on a case-by-case basis:

- Provider must complete the [FNHA Shingrix® Exception Request Form](#) and fax: 1-888-299-9222 for review.
- Decision will be sent to submitting provider and the Client's pharmacy.

## **What should I know about Shingrix® vaccine administration?**

### **ADMINISTRATION AT A PHARMACY**

BC PharmaCare covers the cost of the drug administration fee when Shingrix® is administered to Clients by a pharmacist. You won't be charged for this service.

### **ADMINISTRATION OUTSIDE OF A PHARMACY**

If you are taking a Shingrix® vaccine from the pharmacy, make sure you talk to the pharmacist and the health care professional who will inject the vaccine about the storage and refrigeration requirements of the vaccine.

**If you have any questions about the exceptional review, please contact Health Benefits at 1-855-550-5454.**