

IT'S NOT 'JUST' SHINGLES

Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) is a chronic and debilitating form of neuropathic pain.¹

PHN is a common yet little-known complication of shingles.^{2,3}

People have described the pain of shingles as:4



Pain can persist for months or even years after the rash has healed and is known as **postherpetic neuralgia (PHN).**5

The Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) causes chickenpox and can reactivate later in life to cause shingles.^{1,2}

shingles typically appears as a painful rash limited to one side of the body,² usually on the face or upper half of the body.⁷

Shingles can also lead to other complications and can affect the eye:

- 10-25% of cases
- Can lead to prolonged or permanent pain, facial scarring and loss of vision.⁵



Reactivation of the virus occurs more frequently in the elderly and immunosuppressed people.8

Virus Reactivates

There is **no cure for shingles** or **PHN**.

When started within 72 hours of the onset of the rash, antiviral therapy can reduce the severity and duration of shingles.¹





PHN can have an impact on quality of life, comparable to other chronic diseases such as

heart failure, type-2 diabetes and depression.



Estimated annual GP consultations for PHN:²

- **41,700** for older Australians (50+)
 - **23,100** for people aged 60-79



The risk and severity of PHN also increases with age²; up to **50%** of older Australians with shingles may develop PHN.¹⁰



Most Australians have had chickenpox and are therefore *at risk* of developing shingles.¹

By 85, one in two
Australians will have
experienced
shingles.10



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1. Cunningham A L. et al. 2008. The Prevention and Management of Herpes Zoster. MJA. Vol 188 No.3 pp. 171-176. | 2. Stein A N. et al. 2009. Herpes zoster burden of illness and health care resource utilisation in the Australian population aged 50 years and older. Vaccine. Vol 27, pp. 520-29. | 3. Johnson RW. 2006. Patient awareness of herpes zoster: NJA No. 19 pp. 306-514. | 5. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. 2008. Morbality Meeby Report Prevention of Herpes Zoster. Vol. 19 pp. 306-514. | 5. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. 2008. Morbality Meeby Report Prevention of Herpes Zoster. Vol. 57 RR-5.NHMRC. 2008. | 6. Bouhassira D. et al. 2012. Patient perspective on herpes zoster and its complications: An observational prospective study in patients aged over 50 years in general practice. Pain. Vol. 153 pp. 342-349. | 7. Oxman M N. 2000. Varicella-zoster virus: virology and clinical management. Cambridge University Press. Ch 13 pp. 246-266 | 8. Schmader K., Ginann J.W., Watson P.C. 2008. The Epidemiological, Clinical and Pathological Rationale for the Herpes Zoster Vaccine. Journal of Infectious Diseases. Vol 197:5207-15. | 9. Oxman M N. et al. 2005. A Vaccine to Prevent Herpes Zoster and Postherpetic Neuralgia in Older Adults. N Engl J Med. Vol. 352:2271-84. | 10. NHMRC. 2008. The Australian Immunisation Handbook 9th Edition. Available at: http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.ns/Content/Handbook-home [Last accessed: 18 September 2012]

A survey of 337 Australian men and women aged 60 years and over found that PHN can impact a patient's life in many ways:



PHN patients were found to be more **anxious**, down and **fearful** of their diagnosis than those without PHN.5



Two in three PHN patients reduced or stopped socialising.⁵

BEFORE

AFTFR



DIAGNOSIS DIAGNOSIS

Patients' outlook on life was impacted after PHN diagnosis.5

PHN has a dramatic effect on a person's ability to undertake simple day-to-day activities:

Almost three in five had to reduce or stop their exercise and/or hobbies.5



Sleep was also impacted.5



Almost one in three had difficulty with simple activities such as bathing and getting dressed due to **PHN**.

Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) is responsible for an estimated 41,700 GP consults per year (in patients aged 50+) and places substantial burden on

the Australian healthcare system.1

In people aged 60 and over, shingles and PHN accounts



\$16.7 million:

\$3.3 million.





PHN can also interfere with a person's work^{2,3} and place

70% say PHN is as or more painful than a burn, a cut requiring stitches or arthritis pains



Almost two in three described their **PHN** as being 'electric, like my nerve endings were on fire".5

The prevalence of shingles and PHN is expected to increase significantly in the coming years, given our growing older population.2,6



2.7m 2007

2056

7-10m

Australia's population aged 65+7