

Introduction

Shingles (herpes zoster) is a viral infectious disease caused by the reactivation of a latent varicella zoster virus (VZV), generally decades after the primary infection (chicken pox). It is most commonly seen in adults due to reduced level of immunity, but it can occur at any age. Shingles cannot spread from one person to another, but people who have not had chickenpox before could catch chickenpox from someone with shingles. This is because shingles is caused by the chickenpox virus.

Shingles first symptom start most commonly with abnormal skin sensations and pain in the affected area of skin. It is followed by headache, discomfort and less commonly fever. Within days or weeks, a fluid filled blisters rash typically appears on the skin.

The affected area may be intensely painful with associated (tingling, pricking, or numbness of the skin), and intense itching is common. The spotty/wounds usually begin to dry and scab 3–5 days after appearing. The total duration of the disease is generally between 7 and 10 days; however, complete healing may take more than 4 weeks.

Case study

Belinda is a 75-year-old woman living with her husband. She reported to the GP with pain in some areas of the body and some part of the face. Based on clinical presentation and examination she was provisionally diagnosis with Shingles (herpes zoster) and treatment was commenced immediately.

Questions for discussion

What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to measure the number of individuals with shingles at any one time?

What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to monitor the number of individuals with shingles at any one time?

What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to control the number of individuals with shingles at any one time?

Identify some factors that may influence the health and well-being of individuals affected by shingles. What health education information will you give to the community about this disease?

As this is a discussion, you will be awarded a mark based on the knowledge, understanding, and skills that you demonstrate during your talk and discussion. You may be asked questions to clarify any points you make as part of this. Your work must be underpinned by researched facts and data that show your research skills and understanding of the key points that you have included.