

# Shingles

## Symptoms

Severe pain, itching, and numbness along certain nerve pathways, commonly involving one side of the body. About 1 to 3 days later, a red rash appears at the site. Clusters of blisters appear soon after, usually on one side of the body and closer together than in chickenpox. The blisters dry out and crust over within a few days. The rash and pain usually disappear within 3 to 5 weeks.

Shingles is a milder illness in children than in adults, but it can be a serious illness in those who have weakened immune systems.

## Spread

A person must have already had chickenpox disease in the past to develop shingles. Shingles does not spread from one person to another as shingles. When people who have not had chickenpox have contact with the fluid from the shingles blisters, they can develop chickenpox.

**Incubation Period:** None

## Contagious Period

In an otherwise healthy person, from the start of the rash until all the blisters have crusted.

## Exclusion from School

None, if blisters can be completely covered by clothing or a bandage. If blisters cannot be covered, exclude until the blisters have crusted. Persons with severe, disseminated shingles should be excluded regardless of whether the sores can be covered.

## Treatment

Antiviral medications may be prescribed. Call your physician for a diagnosis.

Thank you,  
School Nurse