

LIFESTYLES

Seniors and the shingles vaccine

Q. I'm 68. Should I get the shingles vaccine?

A. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says adults 60 and older with normal immune systems should get the shingles vaccine.

Shingles is a painful skin disease caused by the chickenpox virus awakening from a dormant state to attack your body again. Some people report fever and weakness when the disease starts. Within two to three days, a red, blotchy rash develops. The rash erupts into small blisters that look like chickenpox. And it's very painful.

Anyone who has had chicken-pox can get shingles. Half of all Americans will get shingles by the time they are 80. Shingles occurs in people of all ages, but it is most common in people between 60 and 80. Each year, about 600,000 Americans are diagnosed with shingles.

The virus that causes chickenpox and shingles remains in your body for life. It stays inactive until a period when your immunity is down. And, when you're older, your defenses ain't what they used to be.

The inactive virus rests in nerve cells near the spine. When it reactivates, it follows a single nerve path to the skin. The shingles rash helps with its diagnosis; the rash erupts in a belt-like pattern on only one side of the body, or it appears on one side of the face. It usually begins as a patch of red dots which become blisters.

Physicians treat shingles with antiviral and pain medications. The antivirals



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don't cure shingles, but they weaken the virus, reduce the pain and accelerate healing. The antiviral medications work faster if they are started early — within 72 hours from the appearance of the rash.

The disease's name comes from the Latin word cingulum, which means belt. The virus that causes shingles is varicella-zoster, which combines the Latin word for little pox with the Greek word for girdle. In Italy, shingles is often called St. Anthony's Fire.

If you have had chickenpox, shingles is not contagious. If you have never had chickenpox, you can catch the virus from contacting the fluid in shingles blisters. However, you will not get shingles, but you could get chickenpox.

The pain of shingles can be severe. If it is strong and lasts for months or years, it is called postherpetic neuralgia. Persistent pain is a common symptom in people over 60. However, most victims of shingles overcome their symptoms in about a month. And the odds are against them getting shingles again.

Outbreaks that start on the face or eyes can cause vision or hearing problems.

Even permanent blindness can result if the cornea of the eye is affected. In patients with immune deficiency, the rash can be much more extensive than usual and the illness can be complicated by pneumonia. These cases, while more serious, are rarely fatal.

Zostavax is the vaccine for shingles. In 2006, it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use in people 60 years old and older to prevent shingles. The vaccine does not treat shingles or post-herpetic neuralgia once it develops.

In a clinical trial involving thousands of adults 60 years old or older, the vaccine prevented shingles in about half of the people and post-herpetic neuralgia in 67 percent of the study participants. While the vaccine was most effective in people 60-69 years old, it also provided some protection for older groups.

In a recent study, older adults who had the shingles vaccine were half as likely to develop the painful condition than unvaccinated adults. The results suggest the vaccine could prevent tens of thousands of shingles cases each year if it were offered to everyone who is eligible, the authors of the study said.

Unfortunately, data from the CDC is showing that only about 15 percent of seniors are getting the vaccine.

If you would like to ask a question, write to fred@healthyeezer.com.

Cicetti is a health care writer with more than 40 years of journalistic experience.

Houglum, Kern exchange vows at St. Thomas Catholic Church

Tara Marie Houglum, daughter of Rick and Raynita Houglum and granddaughter of Frank and Evelyn Youso, International Falls, and Joshua Larry Kern, son of Larry and Michelle Kern, Greenbush, and grandson of Frances Reese, Staples, were united in marriage Saturday, June 28, 2014, at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. Deacon Fran Zaren performed the ceremony.

The bride, escorted to the altar and given in marriage by her father, appeared in a floor-length, strapless ball gown of white satin with unique bead and lace applique accents on the fitted bodice, pick-up skirt, cathedral train, and scalloped fingertip veil. She wore a crystal tiara with matching necklace and earrings. The bride carried a cascading bouquet of pink stargazer lilies, pink roses, baby's breath, and trailing ivy.

Serving as matron of honor was Sarah Novacek, friend of the bride. Bridesmaids were Mary Stauffenecker, Carrie Taggart, and Elle Frislie, sisters of the groom. The attendants wore identical, bright purple gowns and carried circular bouquets, similar to the bride's bouquet, fashioned by Geri Streiff. Each wore matching earrings and necklaces, a gift from the bride.

The bride's personal attendant was her good friend, Vicky Bass.

Serving as the best man was the groom's brother, Jeremiah Kern. Groomsmen were Simon Kern and Peter Kern, brothers of the groom, and Tim Houglum, brother of the bride.

The groom wore a black tuxedo with a silver vest and tie and his attendants wore black tuxedos with purple vests and ties to coordinate the bridesmaids' gowns.



Tara and Joshua Kern

dingate the bridesmaids' gowns.

Serving as ushers were Jake Youso and Matt Youso, cousins of the bride, and Joe Reese, and Matt Hanson, cousins of the groom.

Cassandra Houglum, cousin of the bride, was the flower girl and wore the bride's original First Communion dress. She carried a basket of purple rose petals.

Ring bearer was Jack Klaphake, cousin of the bride. He wore a black tuxedo with a silver tie, to match the groom, and carried a traditional satin pillow.

Dan Carpenter, vocalist, was accompanied on the piano by his wife, Sara Carpenter, friends of the bride. During the lighting of the unity candle, Dan sang the couple's song, "God Gave Me You."

Readers were Jeanine Coulombe-Wolfe, cousin of the bride, Paul Reese, uncle of the groom, and Jessa Youso, cousin of the bride. Program attendants were Chanae Coulombe, cousin of the bride, and Amy Stauffenecker, niece of the groom.

On the eve of the

wedding, a rehearsal dinner was hosted by the groom's parents at the St. Thomas Church basement, International Falls.

Following the wedding, a dinner and dance reception for 280 guests took place at Lenard's Restaurant. The banquet room was decorated in pink and purple, the bride's chosen colors. Hostesses for the reception were Kay Arnold, aunt of the bride, and Janelle Thompson, aunt of the groom. The wedding cake and cupcakes were made by the bride's friend, Jody Barras.

The newlyweds honeymooned on the Mexican Riviera Maya coastline and now reside in Greenbush. Tara teaches college-level math at Greenbush-Middle River High School while finishing up her master's degree, and Josh is a maintenance mechanic for Polaris Industries, Roseau, and a wrestling and trap shooting coach at Greenbush-Middle River High School.

They enjoy fishing, hunting with their black Labs, snowmobiling, and spending time with family.

MEMORIAMs

In loving memory of my Grandma, **Millie Underdahl**, who passed away two years ago today, Sept. 27, 2012.

My Gramma's Gone to Heaven

One quiet day, the angels came and took my Gramma far away.

But in the stillness of the night, I could almost hear her say:

*"Dear Wendy,
I will miss you; you mean so much to me.
But Jesus called me to His side in Heaven I will be.*

A place of God's great beauty — no tears or earthly cares.

Only peace and joy forever and love beyond compare.

So remember all the good times, don't think about the sad;

Treasure all the special moments through the years we've always had.

And if you trust in Jesus, I can promise this and more.

You will get a big hug from me, your Gramma, waiting for you at heaven's door."

**Miss and love you very much Gram,
Your granddaughter, Wendy**

In loving memory of our special and precious loved one, **Millie Underdahl**, who went to heaven Sept. 27, 2012.

A Letter From Our Angel in Heaven

*When tomorrow starts without me,
And I'm not here to see;*

*If the sun should rise and find your eyes,
Filled with tears for me.*

*I wish so much you wouldn't cry,
The way you did today;*

*While thinking of the many things,
We didn't get to say.*

*I know how much you love me,
As much as I love you;*

*And each time you think of me,
I know you'll miss me, too.*

*When tomorrow starts without me,
Don't think we're far apart;*

*For every time you think of me,
I'm right there in your heart.*

Until we meet again,

**Love and miss you and forever in our hearts -
Bonnie, Wendy, Jeff, Shirley and families and dear friends**

P.S. Love, hugs and kisses for Conrad, Gary and Wayne XO XO XO

BIRTHS

Mike and Emily Gedde, and big sister Rena, of International Falls, announce the arrival of their daughter and sister, Ruby Jaclyn Gedde, 5 pounds, 13 ounces, 19 inches long, born Monday, Sept. 22,

2014, at St. Mary's Medical Center, Duluth.

Maternal grandparents are Craig and Sue Halla, of International Falls.


Paternal grandparents are David and Mona Gedde,

of Gonvick.

Maternal great-grandparents are Noel Francisco, Joy King and Floyd and Karine Halla.

Paternal great-grandparent is Shirley Gedde.

VOTE PERRY N HEDLUND NOVEMBER 4TH



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