Shingles

Overview: According to the Mayo Clinic: “Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash. Although shingles can occur anywhere on your body, it most often appears as a band of blisters that wraps from the middle of your back around one side of your chest to your breastbone. Shingles is caused by the varicella-zoster virus — the same virus that causes chickenpox. After you’ve had chickenpox, the virus lies inactive in nerve tissue near your spinal cord and brain. Years later, the virus may reactivate as shingles. While it isn’t a life-threatening condition, shingles can be very painful. Vaccines can help reduce the risk of shingles, while early treatment can help shorten a shingles infection and lessen the chance of complications.” Here is a link to an official government article about Shingles, including symptoms and conventional treatments.

Based on my own experience and common sense, we are more likely to develop shingles when doing things that lower immune function — e.g. being under unusual stress, not eating food with enough nutrition and over-consuming sugar. The faster you start remedies and the more of them you use, the more likely you are to whip shingles promptly. I had shingles a while back and, using only the natural treatments listed below, I was back to normal in just a few days. I remembered how long my Mom had suffered with shingles and, being in a big hurry, I threw the book at it using a variety of approaches.

Relieve pain fast. There is nothing wrong with symptom relief because, if you can feel a little better, you might be more able to attack the root of the shingles symptoms.

- Ice packs help a lot to cool down the itch and pain of shingles.
- Aloe vera gel topically helps calm the pain and boosts the healing of shingles damage just as it does for sunburn. Lily of the Desert brand contains the highest amounts and broadest molecular weight ranges of the therapeutic polysaccharides.
- Add some magnesium to calm the nerves. Best Brain Magnesium is supportive of the brain, so logically might help nerves. It is well absorbed and less likely than other types to cause loose stool.
- Maybe check to see if caffeine makes your nerves tenderer and so more reactive to the shingles pain.

Natural antivirals. The doctor may prescribe antiviral drugs because it is the main tool medicine has for shingles. Please read the side effects of the particular medication. (Here is a database.) You can give these natural virus remedies a chance first, but, I know no reason they couldn’t be used along with medication to go after the shingles virus from different directions.

- The amino acid L-Lysine is good for any virus but particularly well known for suppressing herpes type viruses and shingles is one of those. Milk, potatoes and chicken are good sources, but in this case use supplements and at higher doses than the label says, maybe 1,000 mg 3 times a day.
- Clear Shingles product is a combination of homeopathics and herbs
- Sambucol or Sambucus (elderberry) is also useful for the flu, might help with shingles and at least it tastes yummy.

Boost immune function. These are roughly prioritized, but any one of them might be the magic one for you. Actually, there is no reason you can’t use as many as you want depending on how fast you want to get well.

- Avoid sugar because it reduces immune function and ultimately it is your immune system that has to dispatch the shingles viruses. Sugar reduction is one suggestion in my article on the immune system.
- Vitamin D in large doses (e.g. 10,000 a day. For a short time you can do much more.)
- Up the dosages of all your vitamins, e.g. Vitamin A 10,000 or more, Vitamin C 10,000 or more and 50-100 mg B complex plus sublingual B12. Be more cautious about upping minerals except as noted in this article (e.g. zinc and magnesium). There is less flexibility with mineral doses than with vitamins because it is important to keep them in balance and they stay in the body longer.
- Aloe vera internally helps immune function and boosts antioxidants in the blood as well as helping you absorb your other supplements. Lily of the Desert has been shown to do all that in clinical studies. You get the most benefit from Lily of the Desert because it has the highest concentration of the active constituents that make aloe work.
- Zinc lozenges, per label instructions are helpful for other viral conditions and why not shingles?
- Perfect Health Colostrum is great.
- Selenium yeast, 200 micrograms. The is the most effective form of selenium.
- Immune herbs: Echinacea is fairly well researched. Astragalus is less studied but has a long history of use. These are not specific for shingles, just helpful to your immune system.
- Thymus glandular tablets. The thymus gland educates an important class of immune cells. The supplement is the tissue of that particular gland from an animal. It contains the exact nutrients in the same proportions and combinations as our own glands. I believe there is also an energetic component because studies have shown that the raw materials somehow find their way to the same gland in us. These supplements have been in use for over 100 years. (If you’d like to know more, read this article by Dr. David Williams.)

**Reduce inflammation.**

- Anti-inflammatory herb: Curcumin from Turmeric-e.g. Meriva by Doctor’s Best is a good choice.
- Fish oil. The omega-3’s are good for immune function too and a whole bunch of other things.

**Reduce toxic load:**

- Drink LOTS of clean water. (I use and recommend Aquasana filters.)
- Use your Far Infrared Sauna if you have one. Sweat helps the body get rid of heavy metals and petrochemical contaminants that gum up cellular function.
- Aloe vera again! More than one clinical study has demonstrated that Lily of the Desert aloe reduces blood levels of the toxins ammonia and nitrates. For an even more thorough detoxing effect, check out their detox formula.
- Lymphatic drainage massage. You may only be familiar with one part of the lymphatic system, the lymph nodes that sometimes swell and hurt during a sore throat or other illness. The lymphatic system is actually a secondary circulatory network that moves toxins toward the exits and circulates immune cells. A specialized massage therapist can make sure yours is working properly.
- Coffee enemas. Might as well make sure the liver is better able to do its complex job.

**Speed healing and build yourself up in general:**

- Lots and lots of rest. Your body does most of its repair work while you sleep.
- Melatonin as a sleep aid and because it is an antioxidant. A dose of 1 mg or even ½ of one may be enough.
- An alignment and laser treatments, e.g. from your chiropractor. Having any of your structure out of alignment can short circuit the flow of healing energies. Cold laser can boost immune function and healing directly in the areas of the shingles rash.

*Incidentally, there are indications that the chicken pox vaccination program for children might have had the unintended consequence of increasing the incidence of shingles in adults and increasing the severity of outbreaks. Here is an interesting article on that subject. I worry about the shingles vaccine for adults because it is a live virus. Even the government does not recommend it if your immune system is weakened...do we always know if that is the case?*