

News Release

For Immediate Release

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How Do I Prevent Shingles?

McCook – Ask anyone who has experienced the Shingles virus and they will tell you to do anything that you can to prevent it from happening. “Shingles can vary from mild rash and a few blisters to a severe rash with blisters that resembles a burn,” explains Melissa Propp, Public Health Nurse at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD). “In many cases, Shingles causes pain that has been described as sharp, shooting and throbbing. The rash can be unusually sensitive to touch.”

It’s hard to tell when the Shingles rash will erupt. Here are some factors:

- If you’ve had chickenpox, the Shingles virus is already inside you - 98% of adults in the United States have had chickenpox.
- You are at greater risk for Shingles as you get older. Your immune system weakens as you age.
- Shingles can strike at any time.
- The Shingles rash forms where the nerves from the spinal cord connect with the skin – the dermatome. Usually the rash will only appear along a dermatome located on one side of the body.

“One in three people will get Shingles during their lifetime,” shares Propp. “Unfortunately one in every four people who get Shingles will experience some type of complication. Prevention is the key!”

A one-time Shingles virus shot is available at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department and additional facilities throughout the nine counties. SWNPHD can bill insurance or determine if you are eligible for discounted or free adult vaccines. Other adult immunizations are also provided at the SWNPHD office.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. For more information call Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street, McCook – one block north of Arby’s. You can also follow us on Facebook.com/swnphd and Twitter@swpublichealth.

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