

MedStar Health, Inc.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Policy Number: MP.031.MH
Last Review Date: 05/27/2021
Effective Date: 08/01/2021

MP.031.MH – Shingles Vaccine: Zostavax, Shingrix

This policy applies to the following lines of business:

- ✓ MedStar Employee (Select)
- ✓ MedStar CareFirst PPO

MedStar Health considers the **Shingles Vaccines** medically necessary for the following indications:

ZOSTAVAX VACCINE:

No longer available in the United States and will not be covered after November 18, 2020.

SHINGRIX VACCINE:

This vaccine is indicated for prevention of herpes zoster (shingles) in **adults aged 50 years and older**. It is not indicated for prevention of primary varicella infection (chickenpox).

Limitations:

Shingrix should not be administered to:

1. A person with a history of severe allergic reaction, such as anaphylaxis, to any component of a vaccine or after a previous dose of Shingrix
2. A person who is known to be seronegative for varicella
3. A person experiencing an acute episode of herpes zoster. Shingrix is not a treatment for herpes zoster or postherpetic neuralgia (PHN). The general guidance for any vaccine is to wait until the acute stage of the illness is over and symptoms abate.
4. Shingrix has not been studied in pregnant women or women who are breastfeeding. Providers should consider delaying Shingrix vaccination for these women.
5. Adults with a minor acute illness, such as a cold, can receive Shingrix. Adults with a moderate or severe acute illness should usually wait until they recover before getting the vaccine. This includes anyone with a temperature of 101.3°F or higher

Shingrix has been in use since 2017 and is recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) as the preferred shingles vaccine over Zostavax.

Background

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster or varicella zoster, is caused by reactivation of the dormant varicella-zoster virus (VZV). VZV is the same virus that causes chickenpox

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and stays in the body for life. Anyone who has been infected by chickenpox could develop shingles, though not all will. With increasing age and a weakened immunity to VZV, the virus can reactivate causing painful blisters typically on one side of the body. Shingles is most common in people 50 years of age and older and risk of complications increases with age. Common symptoms associated with shingles includes itching and painful rashes, typically presented as clusters of blisters in a single area of the body. Shingles can lead to complications such as post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN), a persistent nerve pain occurring after the rash has healed.

According to the CDC, the new shingles vaccine called Shingrix was licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2017. CDC recommends that healthy adults 50 years and older get two doses of Shingrix, 2 to 6 months apart. Shingrix provides strong protection against shingles and PHN. Shingrix is the preferred vaccine, over Zostavax, a shingles vaccine in use since 2006.

Codes:

CPT Codes / HCPCS Codes / ICD-10 Codes	
Code	Description
90736 (Zostavax)	Zoster vaccine live for subcutaneous use.
90750 (Shingrix)	Zoster (shingles) vaccine (HZV), recombinant, sub-unit, adjuvanted, for intramuscular use

References

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 years and Older, United States – 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Prevention of Herpes Zoster. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR January 26, 2018 / 67(3);103–108 <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6703a5.htm>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC: Shingle Vaccine Information Sheet (VIS). Current date: 10/30/2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/shingles-recombinant.html>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Shingrix Recommendations. Last Reviewed Date: October 25, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/shingles/hcp/shingrix/recommendations.html>

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- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Approval Letter – Zostavax. STN: BL 125123/0. Last Updated: 12/26/2019. <https://www.fda.gov/biologicsbloodvaccines/vaccines/approvedproducts/ucm136941.htm>
- Voelker R. FDA expands age range for shingles vaccine. JAMA. 2011 Apr; 305(15): 1526. <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=897078>

Disclaimer:

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MedStar Health reserves the right to review and update the medical payment and prior authorization guidelines in its sole discretion. Notice of such changes, if necessary, shall be provided in accordance with the terms and conditions of provider agreements and any applicable laws or regulations.

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