

# controlling shingles Naturally

By

Dr. Dennis Clark

[NaturalShinglesTreatment.com](http://NaturalShinglesTreatment.com)

## NOTICE

The purpose of this report is to increase your knowledge about controlling shingles naturally. It is not intended as medical advice and it is not meant to diagnose or treat any individual's health problems. You should not discontinue any course of medical treatment or undertake any new treatment without first consulting your own healthcare practitioner.

Copyright 2014 by Dr. Dennis Clark, Tempe, AZ

PERMISSIONS: **YES!** You may copy and distribute this document by electronic or other means, without charge in its entirety, without alteration, for non-commercial use. Please do so!

# Controlling Shingles Naturally



Life is too short to be ruined by this! Fortunately, Mother Nature offers a variety of ways to control shingles without using dangerous drugs. And modern science backs this up. Read on and find out what you can do to alleviate this miserable affliction.

## THE UNFAIRNESS OF IT ALL

The standard picture of life is supposed to include the enjoyment of your mature years as you approach retirement and look forward to the fruits of your labor. Childhood diseases such as chickenpox are supposed to be in the rearview mirror, just memories from long ago. As you age, however, seemingly unfair things begin to happen to your body, including the decreased ability of your immune system to fight off all of the challenges that come your way.

Shingles is one of those challenges, in this case one that has been lurking inside you for years. The chickenpox virus, technically known as herpes zoster virus (HZV), shows up as shingles later in life. This virus has some classic properties of the herpes family of viruses:

- ...It hides
- ...It can be latent for decades
- ...It is opportunistic, taking advantage of immune system weaknesses
- ...It destroys nerve cells just under the skin, causing burning pain
- ...Then it destroys the skin cells themselves, leading to horrible rashes

HZV has baffled the medical community for centuries. Most people who had chickenpox as children never show any signs of the virus later in life.

You are probably reading this report because you are in the smaller group of people whose childhood disease has come back to haunt you in the form of shingles. Although we can say that, in general, shingles appears when your immune system is down, this factor alone is not a dependable predictor of outbreaks. Genetics, environment, stress, overall health, and numerous other factors play roles that influence whether you will get shingles. They also influence how often you will have outbreaks, how long they will last, and how intense they will be.

## MODERN MEDICAL APPROACHES

The only certainties about shingles are that it is inherently not a fatal condition and that there is no permanent cure for it. Your challenge, therefore, is to do whatever you can to control outbreaks. Mainstream medicine offers two strategies at the moment.

One is the use of antiviral drugs that suppress the replication of the virus, and the other is a rather new shingles vaccine. Antiviral drugs can reduce the frequency of outbreaks, although drugs are not very effective in reducing the duration of rashes or in relieving the pain caused by them. Side effects from such drugs arise as a consequence of suppressing the immune system, which undermines the healing power of your own body. Also, these medicines are contraindicated for people who are already taking certain heart medications or medications for lowering blood sugar.



The most commonly used antiviral drugs against shingles are being replaced by newer drugs because of expiring patents on the older versions. All too often, decisions by doctors on which drugs to prescribe are being influenced more by sales messages from the manufacturers than by the best interests of their patients.

The shingles vaccine is only approved for people over 50 years old, because that is the only age group that has been studied so far. Research predicts a 50% percent success rate in this age group in the short term. No long-term data are available, since this vaccine has not been in use for very long. Nevertheless, as you might expect, the shingles vaccine is now being

marketed heavily in spite of its limited approval and its long-term unknowns. Moreover, any complications or consequences from the use of the new chickenpox vaccine with the new shingles vaccine will not be known for many years. Some doctors, in exasperation, prescribe steroids or steroid-containing creams to relieve itching or pain. The anti-inflammatory power of steroids is famous, as are their long-term side effects. The treatment of symptoms with steroids is, at best, a temporary stop-gap strategy.

One of the most important efforts that you can make for controlling your shingles is to keep abreast of the latest research. It is up to you to stay informed and make the best decisions for your own health, since most doctors don't have the time or inclination to do this for you. For this reason, I have set up a blog and a newsletter as a way to provide you with the best information I can find about controlling shingles naturally, based on scientific research. Catch up on my latest entries there at [NaturalShinglesTreatment.com](http://NaturalShinglesTreatment.com).

## BENEFITS OF NATURAL APPROACHES

Natural medicines are generally safer, cheaper, and without side effects. Furthermore, they offer short term solutions as well as long term health and lifestyle changes that boost resistance and healing. These observations are based on centuries of traditional knowledge as well as on modern scientific research. Research on alternative treatments for shingles shows that it is possible to recover in less than one week, to reduce the frequency of outbreaks, and to diminish pain within three days. Contrast this with mainstream medical protocols that may take six weeks or more and fail to relieve the leftover pain (post-herpetic neuralgia), which can continue for weeks once the outbreak has subsided.



## DIETARY STRATEGIES

A good start for any health-boosting or healing strategies, for any kind of disorder, is a healthy diet. Although diet is a book-length topic by itself, the basic message is that

common sense must prevail for you to give your body its best chance to heal. Your mother's advice to eat your veggies and fruits is as true today as it was when you first heard it.

Another dietary must is to avoid "white" foods as much as possible: sugar, white flour, white potatoes. A sugary food will lower your white blood cell count, which is a component of your immune system, within 10 minutes of eating it. These data, again, just point to common sense. No need to dwell on such obvious recommendations.

## CRITICAL VITAMINS

Although all vitamins are important, especially the essential ones (meaning the ones you must get in your diet), the most overlooked may be vitamin C. The federally determined Daily Value is 60 milligrams. The recommendations by most nutrition professionals are closer to 1,000 milligrams. The biosynthetic amount equivalent to animals who make their own (e.g., dogs and cats) is 6,000 to 9,000 milligrams, depending on your body size. (Most mammals make their own vitamin C internally; humans and other primates do not.) The amount of vitamin C that will be of benefit to you depends on your viral load. During an outbreak, your body can absorb and use more than it does between outbreaks. The 1,000 milligram per day level is a minimum maintenance dose.

Recent research on vitamin E also indicates a useful anti-inflammatory affect based on a higher level than the Daily Value, which is 400 I.U. A measurable anti-inflammatory result occurs in about 8 weeks with a daily intake of 800-1,600 I.U. This means that vitamin E is best used as a long-term supplement for keeping your body ready to fight inflammation.

Based on one recent study, the pain of shingles seems to be reduced by injections of vitamin B-12. Weekly injections of vitamin B-12 are a relatively inexpensive way to get the most impact from this vitamin.

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT RASHES

One of the simplest and quickest ways to get relief from the pain of a rash is to apply a cold wet cloth to it. You can make the cloth colder by putting it into the freezer for a short while after wetting it. Vitamin E oil and emu oil both have topical anti-inflammatory activity. Emu oil is becoming more popular for many types of skin inflammation besides shingles rashes, including eczema, psoriasis, burns, cuts, and rosacea. It is very soothing and does not clog pores like other oils do.

The two best herb-based formulas for topical use are those containing lemonbalm oil (*Melissa officinalis*) and those containing creosote bush resins (*Larrea tridentata*). One product containing creosote bush includes a patented formula that I have done a lot of work with, and it is the best formula that I know of. You can find more information about this formula, and where to get the only product that contains it, by sending me an email at [dennis@naturalshingletreatment.com](mailto:dennis@naturalshingletreatment.com).



I will answer as quickly as I can.

## HERBS AND SUPPLEMENTS

Any internet search for help with shingles is going to yield thousands of websites, with an overwhelming array of choices among natural approaches. The information below represents what I have found to be the best three of these, based on herbs and supplements besides the vitamins mentioned above.

### Herbs

The same formula that provides the best topical control for rashes also provides the best oral form for the control of outbreaks. This is the patented formula that contains leaf resin from the creosote bush (see above). The latest edition of my book on this herbal formula, titled *Shingles Natural Treatment*, is now available as an inexpensive Kindle book on Amazon. You can find out more about this book on my Amazon Author Page here: [Dr. Dennis Clark on Amazon](#). (If you are unwilling to purchase a Kindle

Reader, like I am, worry not ... you can download the [free Kindle for PC](#) (I did.)

## **The Amino Acid Connection**

Two very similar amino acids, lysine and arginine, have opposite effects on HZV. Lysine reduces the duration of outbreaks, while arginine encourages the virus to grow. Lysine, 500 to 1,000 milligrams three times per day, is only needed during outbreaks. Adhering to a low-arginine diet is a lifestyle recommendation. This means avoiding or eating less of the following high-arginine foods: chocolate, nuts (especially peanuts), and cereal grains (wheat, corn, rye, oat). The latter food group may be harmful due in part to their low lysine content, thereby providing a higher arginine to lysine ratio.

## **Probiotics: Your Beneficial Bacterial Army**

Here are two important details for you to link together: 1) Certain bacteria can overwhelm and disable viruses; 2) 70% of your immune cells come from your small intestine, which depends on a healthy population of friendly bacteria. In fact, when your gut is healthy it harbors billions of bacteria that act as your own little army against viruses and all manner of microbial infections. Unfortunately, your bacterial army is too often poisoned by antibiotics, antacids, chlorinated water, prescription drugs, pesticides, and thousands of other toxic chemicals in your diet. This is where probiotics have an important role.

These are dietary bacteria that you can take as supplements that reinvigorate your GI tract, stimulate your immune system, and help your body defend itself against unwanted invaders.

Scientific research on the health benefits of probiotics extends back about a century. It is very clear that the importance of this dietary supplement as a component of your strategies for controlling shingles is enormous. However, finding a formula with the right mixture of bacterial types and amounts is tricky business.

Read my full article about probiotics on my HerbScientist.com blog, under [Probiotics: Bacteria That Are Crucial for Good Health](#), about what to look for in a good product for you and your family.



## STRESS MANAGEMENT

The incidence and severity of shingles increase with increasing amounts of stress. This includes physical as well as psychological stress. Regarding the latter, daily lifestyle in our current society is more stressful than ever, and our stress is made worse by sleep deprivation. Good sleep and regular relaxation would seem to be antidotes to these aggravations, and scientific research reveals many strategies in support of this notion.

Numerous herbs have been well-established for enhancing relaxation and good sleep. These include the top relaxation herbs, valerian, hops, and



kava kava. My favorite sleep supplements are formulas comprising several of these. Not everyone responds the same to any one formula, though. You have to experiment a little to find the best one for you. (I also include a 20 mg dose of melatonin with my sleepy-time herbs.)

One of the traditional relaxation techniques from the Orient, called Tai Chi, has a long history in scientific research. Tai Chi induces a significant physiological response that shows up as an immune boost when people relax during the slow-moving meditative movements. Recent research specifically shows how this boost is targeted to HZV-specific immunity in older adults. What a great combination of health benefits: relax, boost immunity, *and* reduce susceptibility to shingles!

## WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

This brief report is a small beginning for what you can do about controlling shingles naturally. Shingles is an important subject that attracts almost constant attention worldwide among research scientists, medical professionals, drug companies, and holistic practitioners of all kinds. It is a

growing problem because more people are reaching a mature age where their immune systems become susceptible to viral infections and because an increasing number of younger people are also suffering from suppressed immune health that leads to shingles.

Understanding the causes of shingles, how to recognize it (doctors still misdiagnose it too often), how to prevent it, and how to control it when it does occur, all require your attention and a constant vigilance to keep up on the latest developments in medical research. The most important questions for you to continually ask include:

...What are the pros and cons of antiviral drugs?

...What can you expect from the new shingles vaccine (and the new chickenpox vaccine, for that matter)?

...What other dietary strategies are important?

...What does the latest research offer you about herbal or other natural supplements?

...What other kinds of modalities might be of help?

The answers to these and many more questions are too numerous to cover in this short report. Nevertheless, being diligent about controlling shingles begins with being as well-informed as you can be so you can make good decisions about your health. Of course, my blog is always a good place to start: [NaturalShinglesTreatment.com](http://NaturalShinglesTreatment.com).

**All the best in natural health,**

**Dr. D**

(Dr. Dennis Clark, Ph.D.)