

Shingles Vaccine Transitions from Zostavax II to Shingrix

Update#1 to York Region health care providers as of September 29, 2020

Starting in mid-October 2020, the Province of Ontario will transition the publicly funded shingles vaccine from Zostavax® II to Shingrix®. Current evidence and expert recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)¹ indicate that Shingrix® is more effective for preventing Herpes Zoster infection and related complications.

In mid-October, health care providers ordering shingles vaccine from York Region Public Health (YRPH) will receive Shingrix®. **Currently, no Herpes Zoster vaccine is available to order.** Follow-up messaging will be sent when Shingrix® is available.

Shingrix® is a non-live recombinant subunit vaccine, administered through intramuscular (IM) injection as a two-dose series, with the second dose being administered 2 to 6 months after the first dose. This is a difference when compared to Zostavax® II, a live attenuated vaccine which is administered through subcutaneous (SC) injection as a single dose.

Since 2016, Ontario has offered seniors ages 65 to 70 years (i.e., from the 65th birthday to the day prior to the 71st birthday) a one-time publicly funded Zostavax® II vaccine. The eligibility criteria for the publicly funded shingles immunization program will remain the same for the two-dose Shingrix® vaccine. **Individuals aged 65 to 71 years who previously received the publicly funded Zostavax® II vaccine are not eligible for the publicly funded Shingrix® series.** Seniors outside the eligibility criteria can speak with their health care providers about purchasing the vaccine privately.

As a result of COVID-19, individuals born in 1949 or 1950 (i.e., 70-year olds turning 71 in 2020 or 2021 calendar year) who have missed the opportunity to receive the publicly funded Zostavax® II vaccine are eligible to receive Shingrix® and complete the two-dose series by December 31, 2021.

Please note that the latest supplies of Zostavax® II expire October 21, 2020.

To order publicly-funded vaccines, please e-mail your vaccine order form to vaccineinventory@york.ca or fax to 905-830-0578. If you have any questions about ordering vaccines or vaccine distribution, please contact the Vaccine Inventory program at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 74033.

Ministry of Health Resources on Shingles (Herpes Zoster) Immunization Program:

- [Transition to Publicly Funded Shingrix® Vaccine for Ontario's Shingles \(Herpes Zoster\) Immunization Program: Information for Health Care Providers](#)
- [Ontario Publicly Funded Shingles \(Herpes Zoster\) Immunization Program: Shingrix® Vaccine Information for Patients](#)

¹NACI Statement: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/publications/healthy-living/updated-recommendations-use-herpes-zoster-vaccines.html>