

Shingles Vaccine Lowers Risk of Dementia, Major Cardiovascular Events

The vaccine offer protection against heart disease and neurological complications in addition to preventing shingles itself.

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Vaccination against herpes zoster, or shingles, is linked to lower risks of heart disease, dementia and death in people age 50 and older, according to new research presented at [IDWeek 2025](#).

The study analyzed health records from more than 174,000 adults across 107 U.S. health systems. Vaccinated participants were followed for three months to seven years post-vaccination. Researchers compared outcomes from the shingles vaccine to the pneumococcal vaccine and found that adults who had received the shingles vaccine had a 50% lower risk of vascular dementia, 27% lower risk of blood clots, 25% lower risk of heart attack or stroke and 21% lower risk of death.

“Shingles is more than just a rash — it can raise the risk of serious problems for the heart and brain,” said Ali Dehghani, DO, doctor of internal medicine at Case Western Reserve University’s School of Medicine and presenting author. “Our study findings show that the shingles vaccine may help lower those risks, especially in people already at higher risk for heart attack or stroke.”

Previous studies have shown that shingles infection can trigger cardiovascular and neurologic complications. Experts say the study’s findings suggest that the shingles vaccine may help protect against those complications in addition to preventing shingles itself.

In addition to Dr. Dehghani, study co-authors include George Yendewa, MD, MPH.

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