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# Postherpetic Neuralgia

Most people get chickenpox as a child, and the virus that causes this remains, but becomes dormant afterwards. Shingles is a result of reactivation of this latent varicella zoster virus. The incidence of this increases significantly with age. The infection affects a nerve and the skin surrounding it, and usually lasts for a few weeks. Post herpetic neuralgia is generally defined as a pain that persists at least three months after the acute shingles rash heals. This persistent pain occurs most frequently and severely in older individuals. Pain from neuralgia is described as feeling an electric shock, stabbing, jabbing, aching, or burning sensation and usually appears at the same location as the shingles outbreak. Patients suffering from postherpetic neuralgia are often sensitive to even light touch over these areas.

## Postherpetic Neuralgia Pain Treatment

Postherpetic neuralgia is generally confirmed by your pain physician. To avoid getting shingles and postherpetic neuralgia, there is a herpes zoster vaccine available to adults over 50. Patients with postherpetic neuralgia should see a pain management specialist for many different options in treating and relieving their pain. Treatment may include a combination of topical pain creams, opioids, antidepressants, pain relieving skin patches and anticonvulsants. If a patient is able to see a pain specialist within 3 days of the appearance of the rash a course of antiviral medications can be started to significantly reduce the chances of post herpetic neuralgia.

Our highly trained Postherpetic Neuralgia pain physicians care about improving your pain and quality of life. For more information on how Pain Specialists of Orange County can help treat your Postherpetic Neuralgia, please contact us at 949-297-3838.