Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

# SHINGLES - At-a Glance

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| **Definition** | **Shingles** is caused by the reactivation of the patient's latent Varicella zoster virus. It presents with a painful vesicular rash in a dermatomal distribution.<br><br>Shingles is primarily transmitted by direct contact with vesicle fluid in immunocompetent individuals but may be transmitted via infected respiratory secretions from immunosuppressed patients.<br><br>**Disseminated shingles** - (may look like chicken pox)<br>It is transmissible to susceptible individuals as chickenpox.<br><br>The infectious period for localised and disseminated shingles is considered as the time from onset of rash until all the lesions have crusted over. |
| **Management** | • Patients with shingles (if lesions cannot be covered) should be managed in single room isolation to prevent spread to other patients.<br><br>• A **contact precautions sign** must be clearly visible on the door.<br><br>• Patients with disseminated shingles should be isolated in a single room.<br><br>• Staff who are pregnant or immunocompromised and have not had chicken pox or been immunised against chicken pox should not look after patients with shingles<br><br>**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**<br>• Gloves and aprons should be worn when in contact with blood, bodily fluids or items in the environment that may be contaminated as per standard infection control precautions (SICPs)<br><br>• Hand hygiene as per the WHO 5 moments and ensure patient has access to hand hygiene. |
| **Cleaning** | • Any re-usable equipment should be decontaminated with Green Clinell wipes after each use and prior to the use for other patients.<br><br>• All linen must be placed inside a red alginate bag, secured and then placed inside a white bag. |
| **Stop isolation When?** | • When symptoms have ceased, and lesions are dry and have crusted isolation is no longer required.<br><br>• Patients can be discharged home while symptomatic provided they are medically fit.<br>• Receiving hospitals must be informed. |

**Infection Prevention & Control Service**
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