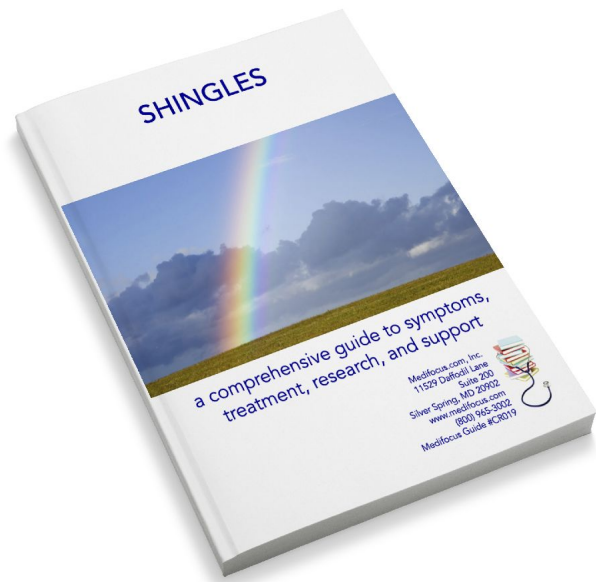


Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Shingles

Updated November 4, 2009



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

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1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of professionals with expertise in diverse areas including experienced medical database researchers and practicing physicians who serve as members of the *Medifocus.com* Medical Advisory Board (MAB). This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for more meaningful discussions between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease

- Treatment options
- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done

- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

SHINGLES

Introduction to Shingles

Shingles, also called Herpes Zoster, is an outbreak of rash or blisters on the skin that is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox - the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). The varicella-zoster virus is now recognized as one of the eight herpes viruses that infect humans. The varicella-zoster virus is closely related to herpes simplex virus (HSV) types 1 and 2, however, it has become clear that the varicella-zoster virus is distinct from the herpes simplex virus both in its biology and in its clinical behavior.

Shingles results from reactivation of the varicella-zoster virus that was acquired during a primary varicella infection (chickenpox) - which usually occurs in childhood after exposure to the airborne virus. Therefore, anyone who has had chickenpox is at risk for shingles later in their life, and, whereas varicella is generally a disease of childhood, shingles becomes more common with increasing age.

It is thought that during the initial chickenpox outbreak, some of the virus invades the nervous system. The virus remains inactive (latent) for decades, living in the nerves. For reasons that are as yet unknown, the virus may reactivate in later years, then travels down the sensory nerve and erupts as a painful rash on the skin (shingles).

A *dermatome* is the area of skin that is supplied by a single nerve branching off the spine. The spinal nerves supply the entire body in slice-like sections (8 cervical sections, 12 thoracic sections, 5 lumbar sections, and 5 sacral sections). The varicella-zoster virus usually lives and erupts within one of these dermatomes only and does not cross the midline of the body. The most frequently affected are the thoracic (torso) and cranial (face/head) dermatomes. When the virus erupts in more than one dermatome, it is said to be *disseminated*.

Dissemination is defined as more than 20 vesicles outside the primary and immediately adjacent dermatomes. In persons with compromised immune systems, the risk of dissemination is approximately 40%. Dissemination on the skin is followed by involvement of the lungs, liver, or brain in 10% of these high-risk persons.

Although shingles is not as contagious as chickenpox, people with reactivated infection can transmit varicella-zoster virus to non-immune contacts. Therefore, patients with shingles should avoid contact with those who have never had chickenpox and women who are pregnant until the rash is resolved.

Primary infection with varicella-zoster virus has traditionally caused about 4 million cases of

chickenpox each year (mostly in children). Reactivation occurs in 15% of cases causing shingles later in life. It is unusual for people with competent immune systems to develop shingles more than once, which suggests that the first reactivation provides further immunological protection.

Nearly every adult in the United States today has experienced chickenpox in their past, although this will change over time following the introduction of a vaccine in 1995. Although the complication rate in healthy children is low, the previous high rate of disease accounted for significant varicella-related mortality and morbidity. In the pre-vaccine era, there were about 4 million cases of varicella annually in the United States, with 100 deaths (mostly in otherwise healthy individuals, and despite the availability of antiviral therapy) and 11,000 hospitalizations. Most varicella-zoster virus infection results in a clinical illness, but about 5% of primary infections are subclinical (no detectable symptoms).

Risk Factors for Shingles

Shingles is one of the most common neurologic diseases in the United States, occurring in 500,000 persons each year. Lifetime prevalence of shingles is estimated to be as high as 20%. Although shingles is not rare in young individuals, the median age of persons with shingles is around 64 years. It has been reported that incidence of shingles in children 10-14 years of age is in the range of one-fifth to one-tenth of the incidence observed in adults 55-65 years of age.

A *risk factor* is any characteristic that increases the chances of an individual developing a certain illness or condition. Risk factors for shingles include:

- Older age - thought to be due to normal age-related changes in the immune system
- Decreased immune function
 - HIV
 - Malignancies
 - Chemotherapy
 - Radiation therapy
 - Chronic corticosteroid use
 - Use of immunosuppressive drugs

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Shingles**
- **Treatment Options for Shingles**
- **Prevention of Shingles by Vaccination**
- **Questions to Ask Your Health Care Provider about Shingles**

To Order the Complete **Guidebook on Shingles** [Click Here](#)
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3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Review Articles - 35 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 48 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 29 Articles
- Postherpetic Neuralgia Articles - 18 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed <January 2006 to November 2009>

Review Articles

1.

Herpes zoster and postherpetic neuralgia: past, present and future.

Authors: Bennett GJ; Watson CP
Institution: Department of Anesthesia, Faculty of Dentistry, and The Alan Edwards Centre for Research on Pain, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
gary.bennett@mcgill.ca
Journal: Pain Res Manag. 2009 Jul-Aug;14(4):275-82.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=CR019&ID=19714266>

2.

Varicella zoster vaccines.

Authors: Creed R; Satyaprakash A; Ravanfar P
Institution: Center for Clinical Studies, Houston, Texas, USA. rcreed@ccstexas.com
Journal: Dermatol Ther. 2009 Mar-Apr;22(2):143-9.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=CR019&ID=19335725>

3.

Urinary retention, erectile dysfunction and meningitis due to sacral herpes zoster: a case report and review of the literature.

Authors: Erol B; Avci A; Eken C; Ozgok Y
Institution: Zonguldak Karaelmas University, Zonguldak, Turkey. erolbulent@yahoo.com
Journal: Urol Int. 2009;82(2):238-41. Epub 2009 Mar 19.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=CR019&ID=19322017>

The **Guide to the Medical Literature** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles** includes the following sections:

- Review Articles - 35 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 48 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 29 Articles
- Postherpetic Neuralgia Articles - 18 Articles

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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

AL - Alabama

Name of Author

Kimberlin DW

Institutional Affiliation

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CA - California

Name of Author

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Institutional Affiliation

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Hornberger J

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Levin MJ

VA San Diego Healthcare System, San Diego, California, USA. mnoxman@ucsd.edu

Lin P

Department of Ophthalmology, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, California, USA.

Oxman MN

VA San Diego Healthcare System, San Diego, California, USA. mnoxman@ucsd.edu

Petersen KL

UCSF Pain Clinical Research Center, Department of Neurology, University of California, San Francisco, CA 94115, USA.

Robertus K

SPHERE Institute and Acumen LLC, Burlingame, California 94010, USA. jhornberger@acumen-llc.com

Rowbotham MC

UCSF Pain Clinical Research Center, Department of Neurology, University of California, San Francisco, CA 94115, USA. karin.petersen@ucsf.edu

The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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6 - Directory of Organizations

After Shingles

www.aftershingles.com/

American Academy of Dermatology

930 E. Woodfield Road Schaumburg, IL 60173

(847) 330-0230

www.aad.org

American Academy of Neurology

1080 Montreal Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55116

(800) 879-1960

-
www.aan.com/

American Academy of Pain Management

13947 Mono Way #A Sonoma, CA 95370

(209) 533-9744

rosemary@aapainmanage.org

www.aapainmanage.org

American Academy of Pain Medicine

4700 W. Lake Glenview, IL 60025

847/375-4731

info@painmed.org

www.painmed.org/

American Pain Foundation

201 North Charles Street, Suite 710 Baltimore, Maryland 21201-4111

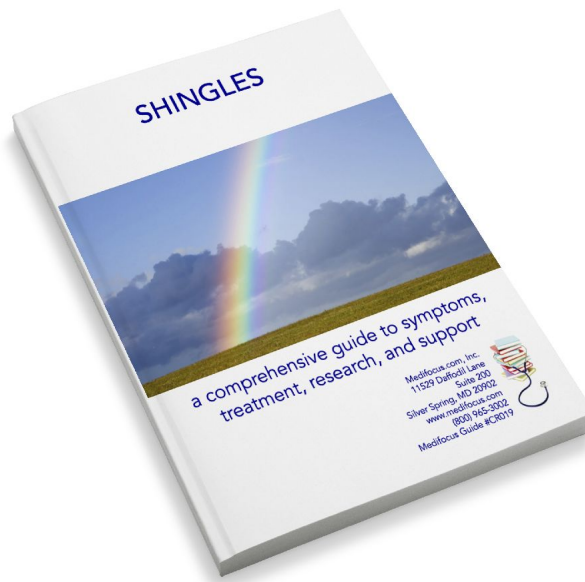
888-615-7246

info@painfoundation.org

www.painfoundation.org

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Shingles** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Shingles.

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