

Ask our physicians

What are shingles and how are they prevented?



Tapasya Srivastava, MD
Internal Medicine
Hallmark Health Medical Associates, Inc.

Shingles is a painful rash that is caused by a virus. They are not contagious. Anyone who has had chicken pox can get shingles, which are a re-activation of a dormant virus due to factors such

as age, a weak immune system, stress or a reaction to certain medications. It is unknown why reactivation of this virus occurs.

Shingles starts with flu-like symptoms and then a rash develops. The typical rash is painful, with a burning sensation that can last for several weeks. The good news is that the rash does go away eventually. Starting anti-viral medication or steroids immediately may help decrease the intensity and duration of the illness. If you think you may have shingles, it is important see your doctor right away.

Shingles vaccine lowers your chance of getting shingles and also decreases the intensity and duration of illness if it occurs. Shingles vaccine can be given to people 50 years of age or older.

To contact Dr. Srivastava, please call (781) 213-5170.

Who would be a good candidate for weight loss surgery?



Jennifer Lane, MD
General and Bariatric Surgeon
Hallmark Health System Center for Weight Management and Weight Loss Surgery

Bariatric surgery is a powerful tool for the treatment of morbid obesity and its associated health problems. Many people struggle with obesity, but are unable to

achieve meaningful weight loss through diet and exercise alone. Surgery is an option for people with a body mass index greater than 40 (or greater than 35 with obesity-related health problems). This is roughly 100 pounds overweight.

Surgery is of course a serious decision, one which both the patient and the surgeon need to consider carefully. People should expect to be informed about the different surgical options and their risks and benefits. A good candidate is someone who is motivated to make a big change and who understands that surgery is only part of the process. A healthy diet and regular exercise routine are still important for success. The support of family, friends and other medical providers can be invaluable. Patients should also be willing to commit to regular follow-up with the bariatric program.

To contact Dr. Lane, please call (781) 306- 6166.

I am planning on getting pregnant soon. What steps should I take to prepare for a successful pregnancy?



Shiloe Burzinski, MD
Obstetrics & Gynecology
Hallmark Health Medical Associates, Inc.

About three months before you're planning your pregnancy:

- Be sure you're up-to-date on your annual physical exam. Screening for breast and cervical cancer are performed during these exams along

with screening for other diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure as appropriate. Review your current medications with your provider to find out if they're safe to take during pregnancy. Be sure you're up to date on your vaccinations also – influenza, rubella and others.

- Start taking prenatal vitamins or vitamins with folic acid 400 mcg (more folic acid may be needed, discuss with your provider) and iron daily.
- Kick those bad habits! Get to a healthy weight through healthy diet and regular exercise. Quit smoking, drugs and drinking alcohol.
- Have information about your personal and family health history ready to review along with any information about complications or problems in your previous pregnancies.
- See your health care provider for more information and/or visit websites such as www.cdc.gov.

To contact Dr. Burzinski, please call (781) 388-4160.

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