***HEALTH NGATEA NEWSLETTER - August 2023***

Greetings  to our Community,

Anyone who has had chickenpox is at risk of developing shingles, a painful blistering rash.  The best protection against
shingles is vaccination. The risk of shingles increases as you get older or if you have a weakened immune system. You
can't catch shingles directly from someone else. However, if you've never had chickenpox or received the chickenpox
vaccine, you can catch chickenpox if you are in close contact with someone who has shingles. This is because the shingles
blisters contain the chickenpox virus.
Before the rash develops, people often have pain, itching or tingling in the area where the rash will develop. Although shingles
can occur anywhere on your body, it most commonly occurs around the back, upper abdomen or on the face. Other symptoms
of shingles can include; fever, headache, chills and an upset stomach. The pain or irritation will usually go away in 3 to 5 weeks.
However, if the virus damages a nerve, you may have pain, numbness or tingling for months or even years after the rash is
healed.
Shingles is less contagious than chickenpox, and the risk of a person with shingles spreading the virus is low if the rash is
covered. Once the rash has developed crusts, the person is no longer infectious. The best way to prevent shingles, is to get
vaccinated. The shingles vaccine used in New Zealand is called Shingrix. You will need two doses, with the second dose, given two
to six months after the first.
***Who Can Get A Free Shingles Vaccine?***
Shingles vaccine is free for 12 months once you turn 65. As long as you receive your first dose when you are 65, your second dose
will still be free, even if you get it after you turn 66.
***Shingrix*** is recommended for anyone aged 50 and over. If you are not 65 years old however, you will need to pay. You are most welcome
to phone the Practice Nurse to discuss or inquire about the vaccine and the associated cost, or to make an appointment to have the
vaccine administered.  Look after yourselves and each other,

Team Health Ngatea.