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Dear Parents and guardians,

We would like to inform you about shingles (herpes zoster), a condition caused by the reactivation of the varicella-zoster virus, which also causes chickenpox. We have had a student presenting with the symptoms and is now at home in isolation. Here are some key points to be aware of:

1. **Symptoms:** Shingles typically presents as a painful rash that can appear on one side of the body or face. Other symptoms may include fever, headache, and fatigue.
2. **Contagion:** Shingles is not spread from person to person. However, the virus can cause chickenpox in individuals who have never had chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine. Therefore, it is important to avoid direct contact with the rash.
3. **Prevention:** We encourage eligible staff and students to get vaccinated against shingles. The Shingrix vaccine is recommended for adults aged 50 and older, as well as for immunocompromised individuals aged 19 and older.
4. **Isolation:** If you or someone you know develops shingles, please stay home until the rash has crusted over to prevent spreading the virus to others.
5. **Hygiene:** Practice good hygiene by washing your hands regularly and avoiding touching the rash.
6. **Awareness:** Be aware of the symptoms and seek medical advice promptly if you suspect you have shingles. Early treatment can help reduce the severity and duration of the condition.
7. **Pregnancy** - If you are immune to chickenpox, you do not need to worry. If you are not immune, the risk of getting chickenpox from someone with shingles on a covered part of the body is very small. If the shingles is widespread or exposed (such as the face or eye), there is a risk of chickenpox infection to you when the blisters are active and until they are crusted over. See your doctor for advice about treatment - <https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-our-patient-information/chickenpox-and-pregnancy/#>

Kind Regards,

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