

















TO YOUR **GOOD HEALTH**

Shingles can recur, even decades later

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am in my 60s. About 40 years ago, I had a case of shingles. Can shingles reoccur, or having once had it am I protected from having it again? I've been given conflicting information whether I need to be vaccinated. -M.F.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I heard a report from a recent study that said a person who has shingles early in life is more likely to suffer a stroke. Would you please explain why? — A.L.R.

ANSWER: Shingles is a disease caused by the reactivation of varicella zoster virus, the virus for chickenpox, which lays dormant in the body for years or even decades. Shingles itself is painful, but the most feared complication has been post-herpetic neuralgia, which can be horrifically painful and can last for months, especially in older people.

In January 2014, researchers in the UK found an increased risk of stroke and other vascular disease, including heart attack, in people who'd had shingles before the age of 40. The study could not answer why, but previous research has shown that blood vessels in the brain can be affected by the virus that causes shingles. There may be a role for the antibodies produced by the body as well.

It is clear that people with shingles at an early age should be even more careful about other risk factors for stroke, especially smoking, blood pressure and cholesterol. A previous history of shingles does not guarantee against further episodes, so the vaccine is recommended at age 60 with or without a history of shingles in the past. The recommendation for shingles vaccine may change: The vaccine has a Food and Drug Administration indication for ages 50-59, but is not recommended by the Advisory Committee.

Shingles questions are among the most frequently asked. The booklet on the shingles virus answers many of them. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donohue — No. 1201W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money

order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My greatniece is 9 years old. She saw her doctor for a bad complexion, and was told that she is stage 3 for puberty. What does this mean, and how many stages are there? - F.N.

ANSWER: Puberty is a process, not an event. It goes on normally for several years. There are five stages of puberty, usually called Tanner stages. There are specific criteria for development that correspond to each stage. Nine years old is on the younger side for Tanner stage 3, but puberty starts at different times for different people, with significant differences that run in

families and by ethnic background. Your great-niece's complexion issue probably relates to high levels of adrenal hormones, which start increasing even before puberty. Very high levels early in puberty should raise concern for a condition called congenital adrenal hyperplasia, although most cases of acne in early puberty are quite normal. If the gynecologist is worried, some simple blood and urine tests can tell you

King Crossword

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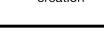
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SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) A pesky health problem should clear up soon. Meanwhile, travel — both for personal as well as for business reasons — is strong in the Aries aspect this week, and well into the next.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Look for Bovines to be on the move this week, whether it's traveling for fun or for business. Other "moves" include workplace adjustments and, for some, relationship changes. GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)

Geminis who have just gone through a

hectic period involving job and/or

family matters might want to take some well-earned time out to relax and restore those drained energy levels. CANCER (June 21 to July 22) A romantic situation seems to have

stalled, just when the Moon Child was

expecting it to go forward. Could that be a bad case of miscommunication going on. Talk it over openly and hon-

estly. LEO (July 23 to August 22) Showing a genuine interest in something that's important to a friend, family member or colleague could open a communication line that had been

pretty much shut down for a while. VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Making a potentially life-changing decision takes as much knowledge as you can gather, plus determination and patience. Take your time working it out. Don't let anyone rush you.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You should be back on schedule and heading in the right direction after clearing up a misunderstanding. But there could still be some setbacks. If so, correct them immediately.

SCORPIO (October 23 to

November 21) A business matter

keeps you pretty busy, but try to

squeeze in time to be with family as

well as close friends. You need the

good vibrations you get from people who care for you.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Investing in an attractive prospect (business or personal) with little or no information can be risky. Avoid future problems by get-

ting all the facts before you act. CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Someone close to you might have an unexpected reaction to a decision you feel you're prepared to make. Listen to his or her point of view. It could prove to be surprisingly

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Don't give up yet. That once warm, personal relationship that seems to be cooling off fast could recover with some tender, loving care, and who better than you to provide it?

N | O | R | M |F I S T ART ESSE T|I|M|B|E|R|WOOER PISCES (February 19 to March 20) ONWARD RYE Career matters are strong this week. You might want to enter a training pro-|A|R|D| L|E|A gram to enhance your skills. Also, consider getting professional help in

King Crossword **Answers** Solution time: 24 mins.

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