



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL: Tuesday, 29 September 2026 - Melbourne, Australia

Nicky Buckley reveals shingles experience as new research shows Australians are not prioritising their risk

- **Almost all Australian adults can develop shingles (herpes zoster) due to having chickenpox earlier in life** – a 'Hidden Health Baggage' that carries the potential to disrupt the moments and priorities that matter in everyday life.¹⁻³
- **New research commissioned by GSK Australia** shows 92% of adults aged 50-69 do not consider it a priority to discuss shingles with their healthcare professional.⁴
- **Australian TV personality Nicky Buckley is speaking publicly about her experience with shingles for the first time, after having the condition multiple times.** On Tuesday 29 September, she will unveil the *What's Your Hidden Health Baggage? Claims Board* in Martin Place, featuring real Australian stories of everyday moments disrupted by shingles.

Beloved long-time Australian TV presenter Nicky Buckley is speaking publicly about her experience with shingles for the first time. Her story comes as new research commissioned by GSK Australia reveals that while many Australians recognise the impact shingles can have, few consider it a priority to understand their own risk of shingles.

Shingles is a potentially debilitating condition that typically develops as a painful, blistering rash.^{1,2} About one in three Australians develop shingles in their lifetime, with risk increasing with age, especially from 50.^{1,2,5}

For Nicky, having experienced shingles multiple times, the impact the condition can have is all too familiar.

"I've had shingles more than once and I still have the scars to show for it. One of the worst episodes was on my face, and I needed nurses coming in twice a day to care for me. It left me exhausted, in pain and unable to work," says Nicky.

Almost all Australian adults can develop shingles due to having chickenpox earlier in life, even if they do not remember having had it – a common 'Hidden Health Baggage' that affects more than 100,000 Australians every year, mostly in people over 50.^{1-3,5}

Despite most Australians recognising the impact the condition can have, new research commissioned by GSK Australia among adults aged 50–69 suggests shingles risk is being deprioritised.⁴

Among the 65% of respondents who have experienced shingles or know someone who has, 79% say one or more areas of life were impacted. This includes usual day-to-day activities (53%), ability to work or earn an income (46%), exercising or staying active (44%), socialising with friends (42%), participating in hobbies or leisure activities (32%) and family celebrations such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries or graduations (20%).⁴

However, only 8% of Australians aged 50-69 consider it a priority to discuss shingles or their individual risk with a healthcare professional.⁴

By comparison, Australians aged 50-69 are more likely to prioritise the very health and lifestyle choices that shingles has the potential to disrupt.⁴ This includes staying on top of their health as they get older (60%), exercising and staying active (56%), looking after their mental wellbeing (56%), attending regular health check-ups (37%) and attending specialist appointments or treatment for an existing health condition (27%).⁴

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On Tuesday 29 September, Nicky will bring that experience to life in the heart of Martin Place, where she will unveil the *What's Your Hidden Health Baggage? Claims Board*, an oversized digital display showing real Australian life moments that were claimed, missed or put on hold by shingles.

"We all have things we're trying to protect, whether that's our family, our work, travel, and even our confidence and independence to simply live our everyday lives," Nicky says.

Nicky hopes sharing her experience, alongside those of other Australians represented through the Claims Board, will encourage Australians aged 50 and over, particularly those living with underlying health conditions, to make shingles a health priority by speaking with their healthcare professional.

Certain underlying health conditions, including asthma, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, renal disease and immune conditions, can be associated with an increased risk of shingles compared to people without these conditions.⁶

In addition to her own experience, Nicky witnessed her father suffer with shingles over Christmas, many years ago. Nicky's father continues to feel the impact today and lives with type 2 diabetes, one of the chronic health conditions associated with an increased risk of shingles.

"Dad has always wanted to stay active. He loved getting out in the community and playing Father Christmas every year, but when shingles affected his vision, he had to cut that short. And more recently as he has aged, it also affected his ability to do simple things like read a book or the newspaper," Nicky recalls.

"It isn't only about the pain or the rash. Shingles can claim parts of everyday life that matter enormously to someone," she said.

The most common complication of shingles is postherpetic neuralgia (PHN), which can cause persistent, often debilitating pain for at least three months after the rash has healed.^{1,2} Shingles can also affect the eye and vision, in some cases leading to impaired vision and, rarely, permanent vision loss.^{1,2}

The risk of shingles increases with age. As we get older, changes in our immune system can make our bodies less effective at fighting infections and diseases, which can allow the inactive virus that causes shingles to reactivate.⁷⁻¹⁰

Professor Robert Booy, infectious diseases specialist, says misconceptions about who is at risk can make shingles easy to overlook.

"People can feel fit and healthy in their 50s and 60s and may not think shingles is something they need to consider. But the risk of shingles increases with age, and may be higher for people living with certain chronic health conditions," said Professor Booy.

"For people already managing an ongoing health condition, shingles has the potential to add another layer of pain and disruption to everyday life, including sleep, daily activities and important responsibilities," he said.

Australians aged 50 and over, particularly those living with certain chronic health conditions, should speak with a healthcare professional to better understand their personal shingles risk and what it could mean for them.

For more information about the signs, symptoms and risk factors for shingles speak to your GP or pharmacist and visit <https://www.knowshingles.com.au/test-your-shingles-knowledge> to test your shingles knowledge.

ENDS

The shingles disease awareness campaign is sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline Australia Pty Ltd (GSK). Patient stories contained within this media release are not representative of all patients' experience with shingles.

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About GSK

GSK is a global biopharma company with a purpose to unite science, technology, and talent to get ahead of disease together. Find out more at [gsk.com](https://www.gsk.com).

*About the survey

An online, nationally representative survey of 1,055 Australian adults aged 50-69 was conducted between 24 and 26 August 2026 by YouGov on behalf of GSK Australia. Respondents were sourced from the YouGov panel, with data weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates. The study was conducted in accordance with ISO 20252:2019 standards. All participants agreed to participate in full transparency on both the source of the survey commissioning, and to the use of their anonymised data.

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