

The Painful Truth: It's Not Just Shingles Patient Survey Summary Findings

The following findings are based on a survey conducted via an online research panel in October 2012 amongst 337 Australian men and women aged 60 years and over who have been diagnosed with shingles by a doctor. The survey was conducted with a geographically representative sample.

Demographics:

- **Sex:** Male 50%, Female 50%*
- **Age:** 60–64 (25%), 65–74 (65%), 75–79 (8%), 80+ (1%)
- **Experience of shingles pain:** Only whilst rash was present (49%); after the rash cleared (11%); whilst the rash was present and after it cleared (40%)
- **Length of pain experienced:** <1 month (36%), 1–3 months (33%), 3 months+ (28%), not sure (4%)
- A total of 93 people (28%) reported pain persisting for a period of 3 months or longer following the shingles rash and were therefore classified as the postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) group.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Shingles pain was most commonly described as “electric, like my nerve endings were on fire” and “overly sensitive to touch” by all respondents
- Those with persistent pain (PHN) were twice as likely to report a negative outlook on life compared to those whose pain resolved with the shingles rash (Shingles patients with PHN 45% vs. shingles patients without PHN 22%)
- Two in three (67%) of those surveyed with PHN reported having to decrease or stop going out and socialising
- More than half (52%) had to limit walking and were unable to sleep properly (57%)
- Almost one in three had difficulty with simple activities such as bathing (31%) and getting dressed (27%)

PHYSICAL IMPACT:

Persistent shingles pain (PHN) is comparable or worse to many other types of pain experienced by the respondent

- 86% said the ongoing pain was as painful or worse than a headache
- 77% said shingles was as painful or worse than a cut requiring stitches
- 71% said shingles was as painful or worse than arthritis pain
- 71% said shingles was as painful or worse than a burn
- 64% said shingles was as painful or worse than root canal treatment or a tooth abscess

* NB: The final sample was found to have a skew towards females (65%). All data were therefore weighted to adjust for this gender skew and all figures included in this summary are weighted figures (50/50 male/female).

Patients with PHN most commonly describe shingles pain as “electric, like my nerve endings were on fire” and “overly sensitive to touch”. Other common pain descriptions included “hot needles”, “stabbing” and “itchy”

- 64% of PHN patients described the pain associated with shingles as being “electric, like my nerve endings were on fire”
- 64% of PHN patients described the pain associated with shingles as “overly sensitive to touch”
- 51% of PHN patients described shingles as being itchy
- 39% of PHN patients described the pain associated with shingles as being “like hot needles”
- 38% of PHN patients described the pain associated with shingles as “sharp”
- 24% of PHN patients described the pain associated with shingles as “stabbing”

One patient said shingles was “like a corkscrew was being screwed into the site of the scabs for up to six 6 months,” whilst another described the pain from the rash to be “like a blow torch being applied to my foot”

Patients with shingles who do not develop PHN also experience significant pain comparable or worse to many other types of pain experienced by the respondent

- 83% said shingles was as painful or worse than a headache
- 75% said shingles was as painful or worse than arthritis pain
- 75% said shingles was as painful or worse than a cut requiring stitches
- 73% said shingles was as painful or worse than a burn
- 58% said shingles was as painful or worse than root canal treatment or a tooth abscess

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT:

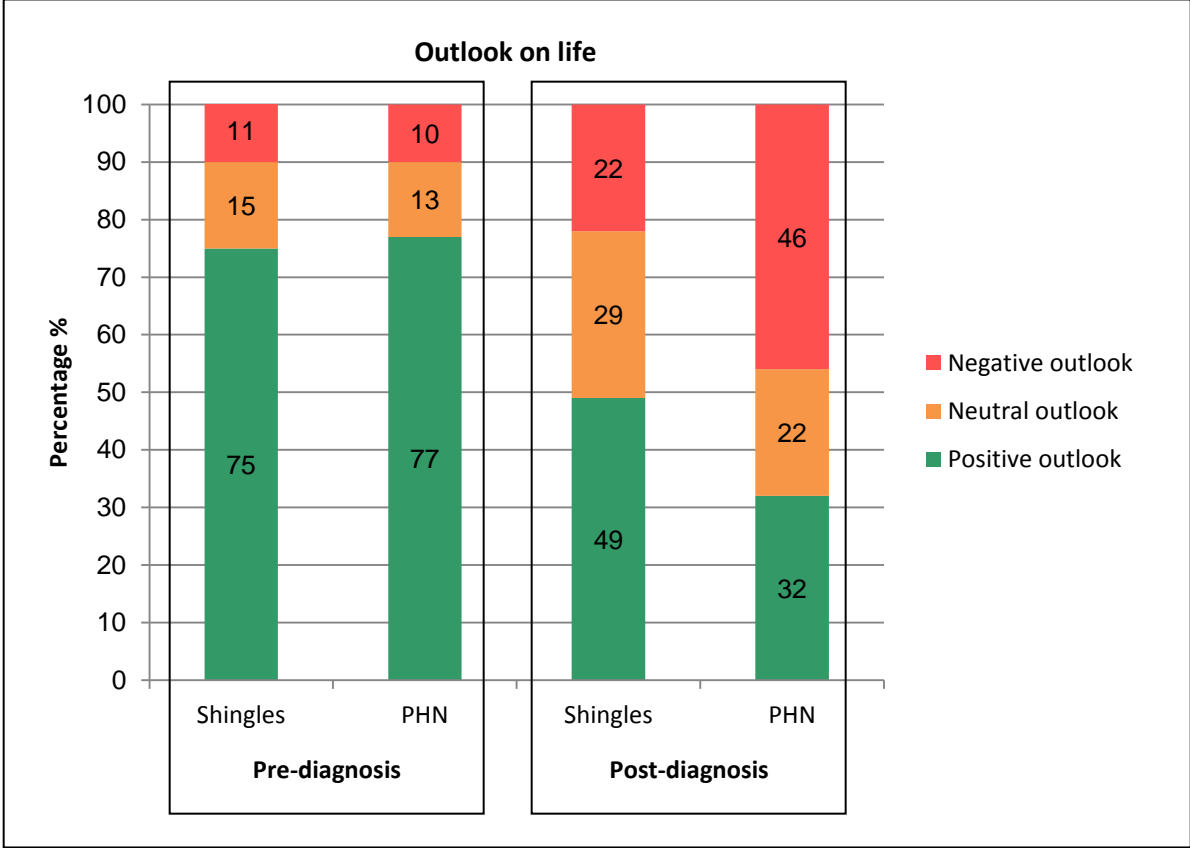
Two in three people with PHN reported negative emotions as a result of their shingles diagnosis

- 49% felt tired
- 36% felt anxious
- 33% felt down
- 20% felt uninformed
- 13% felt angry

PHN patients were found to feel more anxious, down and fearful of their diagnosis than non-PHN diagnosed shingles patients

- 40% of PHN patients felt anxious, compared to 26% of non-PHN diagnosed patients
- 27% of PHN patients felt down, compared to 17% of non-PHN diagnosed patients
- 24% of PHN patients felt fearful, compared to 8% of non-PHN diagnosed patients

Those with PHN were twice as likely to report a negative outlook on life compared to those without persistent pain following shingles



IMPACT ON DAILY ACTIVITIES:

Nearly two in three PHN patients have experienced a negative impact on daily activities as a result of the pain:

Activities impacted by pain		
	Shingles patients	PHN patients
Going out/socialising	67%	67%
Exercise/hobbies	62%	58%
Sleep	52%	57%
Work	52%	48%
Cleaning/housework	49%	55%
Gardening	50%	57%
Walking	49%	52%
Sex	50%	48%
Playing with/giving children/grandchildren a hug	44%	40%
Driving a car	41%	37%
Caring for my partner/children/grandchildren	38%	32%
Cooking and preparing food	36%	38%
Picking up/playing with my pet	34%	27%
Showering/bathing	35%	31%
Getting dressed	32%	27%
Volunteering	29%	35%
Brushing my hair/grooming	29%	31%
Eating meals	24%	24%

--ENDS--



The survey was conducted for CSL Biotherapies by Hall & Partners | Open Mind and released with endorsement from Chronic Pain Australia and Painaustralia

Issued on behalf of bioCSL Pty Ltd
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