



Shingles is a painful skin rash caused by reactivation of the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that gives people chicken pox.

After a person recovers from chicken pox, the virus retreats to the body's nerves, where it can hibernate indefinitely. In about two out of every 10 people, the virus eventually reactivates as shingles.

The reasons for this include:

- An aging immune system (it's most common in adults over age 50).
- Stress.
- Medications that weaken immunity (including chemotherapy and medications given after transplants).
- Infections that weaken immunity (such as HIV).

Shingles usually starts with pain, for days or even weeks before a red rash appears. The pain and the rash are usually focused on just one side and one

part of the body -- on the left or right side of the neck, for example. Within a few days, the rash spots turn into blisters, which crust over within seven to 10 days.

**1 out of 3**  
people will develop shingles, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Shingles can be treated with antiviral medications, but this is usually only helpful if treatment is started within the first 72 hours after the rash appears.

Shingles is only contagious if you've never had chickenpox. In this case, someone with shingles can pass the varicella zoster virus to you, because you don't already have it in your body. For that reason, until blisters have healed, adults with shingles should stay away from unimmunized babies or pregnant women who haven't had either chicken pox or its vaccine.

Shingles can recur after you've had it once, but rarely. The shingles vaccine makes it less likely that you'd develop shingles and can reduce its severity if you do get it. The vaccine is recommended for almost all adults over age 60, even those who have already had shingles. *(caring.com)*



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# Caregivers CORNER

A quarterly newsletter for MCFI Home Care caregivers  
Spring 2015



bits & pieces

About **7.8%** of people 18 and over in the U.S. have hay fever, according to The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology



## Meet Home Care greeter Sam Marty

Sam (Samantha) Marty, a 2012 Franklin High School grad, came to MCFI's Employment Services to learn skills she'd need to work.



"Sam's employment goal is to do clerical work," said Jennifer Lees, a supported employment specialist with Employment Services at the Milwaukee Center for Independence. "She worked with me on a work trial at Geo Synthetics Inc. where she performed clerical duties such as filing, stuffing envelopes and shredding.

"After this work trial, she continued to express interest in the clerical field," said Lees. "We decided to do a temporary work experience in Home Care."

That was made possible because of the collaborative effort between MCFI's Employment Services and Home Care staff, who communicated to each other Sam's employment goals.

Sam, pictured above, started at MCFI Home Care on Dec. 1, 2015, and works 12 hours a week, said Sarah Leipold, Home Care's community education and engagement coordinator. It's been a win-win for Employment Services and Home Care.

"She has been greeting patrons as they drop off their timesheets, scanning timesheets into the computer and entering the information needed," said Lees.

Sam's greetings creates a friendlier Home Care environment. "All our workers seem to brighten up when they come here," said Leipold.



## SLEEP TO LOSE WEIGHT

In a new study, scientists found that a single night of sleep loss impaired metabolism on par with eating a high-fat diet for six months!

We know from past studies that both poor sleep and high-fat diets can impair the action of the all-important metabolic hormone insulin, which can lead to the entire family metabolic diseases, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

We also already know that poor sleep can boost appetite and decrease our activity levels. Bottom line: Sleep is VITAL for weight control and overall health, so make it a sacred priority in your life.

*(The Obesity Society Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA. 2015)*



I recently reviewed all of the studies I had in my files related to dark chocolate, and I am happy to report the following science-based health benefits:

- Enhances blood flow, including blood flow to the heart and brain
- Lowers blood pressure
- Improves the function and health of blood vessels
- Lowers triglycerides Raises HDL (good) cholesterol levels Lowers LDL (bad) cholesterol levels
- Reduces inflammation Improves the action of the hormone insulin (which means better blood sugar metabolism)
- Enhances cognitive function
- Lowers the risk of heart disease and strokes Improves longevity
- Lifts mood and boosts energy



Dr. Ann Kulze



My best advice is to include a small portion – up to ½ ounce daily of the highest cacao dark chocolate your palate enjoys. The higher the cacao levels, the more beneficial antioxidants it contains; 1-2 squares from a large dark chocolate bar of 72% or higher cacao is fantastic.

*(Dr. Ann Kulze is a physician, best-selling author, and motivational speaker. Learn more at <http://www.drannwellness.com>)*



## IS IT HAY FEVER or a cold?

Hay fever, also called allergic rhinitis, causes cold-like signs and symptoms, such as a runny nose, itchy eyes, congestion, sneezing and sinus pressure. But unlike a cold, hay fever isn't caused by a virus. Hay fever is caused by an allergic response to outdoor or indoor allergens, such as pollen, dust mites or tiny flecks of skin and saliva shed by cats, dogs and other animals with fur or feathers (pet dander).

Besides making you miserable, hay fever can affect your performance at work or school and generally interfere with your life. But you don't have to put up with annoying symptoms. You can learn to avoid triggers and find the right treatment.

See your doctor if allergy medications don't provide relief or cause annoying side effects or you have another condition that can worsen hay fever symptoms, such as nasal polyps, asthma or frequent sinus infections.

*(Source: mayoclinic.org)*

	HAY FEVER	COLD
Symptoms	Runny nose; no fever	Runny nose; body aches; fever
Onset	Right after exposure to allergens	1-3 days after exposure to virus
Duration	As long as exposed to allergens	3-7 days

## Interview participants wanted for research project

Caitlin Taylor, a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee student, is conducting research on the experiences of Home Care aides in Milwaukee, and she's interested in interviewing African American female personal care workers.

If you are interested in participating in the study, titled "Lived Experiences of Home Care Aides in Milwaukee, please contact her at [cdtaylor@uwm.edu](mailto:cdtaylor@uwm.edu).

This study will contribute to the larger discussion on minority women's work, wage trends, and workers' rights. It will also serve as a resource for care work advocates.

