



Varicella-zoster (shingles)

Australian national notifiable diseases case definition

This document contains the surveillance case definition for varicella-zoster (shingles), which is nationally notifiable within Australia. State and territory health departments use this definition to decide whether to notify the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care of a case.

Version	Status	Last reviewed	Implementation date
1.2	No Change	2017	1 January 2018
1.1	No Change	14 August 2008	14 August 2008
1.0	Initial CDNA case definition	2006	2006

Reporting

Both **confirmed cases** and **probable cases** should be notified.

Confirmed case

A confirmed case requires **laboratory definitive evidence** AND **clinical evidence**.

Laboratory definitive evidence

1. Isolation of varicella-zoster virus from a skin or lesion swab.

OR

2. Detection of varicella-zoster virus from a skin or lesion swab by nucleic acid testing from a skin or lesion swab.

OR

3. Detection of varicella-zoster virus antigen from a skin or lesion swab by direct fluorescent antibody from a skin or lesion swab.

Clinical evidence

A vesicular skin rash with a dermatomal distribution that may be associated with pain in skin areas supplied by sensory nerves of the dorsal root ganglia.

Probable case

A probable case requires **clinical evidence** only.

Note: Laboratory confirmation should be strongly encouraged for vaccinated cases. If positive, samples should be referred for identification as a vaccine or wild type strain.