

# Anti-shingles vaccine available for QC seniors

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Quezon City Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte yesterday urged senior citizens in the city to avail themselves of free anti-shingles vaccine to protect them from infection and complications associated with the disease.

Belmonte said the local government has allocated P20 million for the vaccines, which are available in barangays and health centers in the city.

"There are around 500,000 senior citizens in the city, and many of them are at risk of contracting the shingles virus," she said.

Shingles or herpes zoster is a viral infection manifested by painful skin rash. The infection is caused by the varicella zoster virus, which also causes chicken pox.

Health officials said senior citizens are among those most vulnerable to the disease due to their weakened immune system.

Shingles may lead to complications such as scarring, hearing problems, loss of sleep, depression and necrotizing fasciitis.

"We have coordinated with the city health department and barangay health centers to provide this service to the elderly who want to get vaccinated. They can get it anytime, and they will be given just once every three years," Belmonte said.

"We value their contributions to the city, that's why we continue to implement projects like this for their welfare," she added.

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