

Participant newsletter

August 2023



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Welcome to our [ATHENA study August newsletter](#)



Dear Participant,

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter! We wanted to update you on the study so far and to thank you for your continuing support. All your contributions are vital to the outcome of the study.

THANK YOU for choosing to be part of this research.

With best wishes from Zoë, Siân, Anna, Lyn, Gill, Erin, Sophie & Matt (the ATHENA study team)

Study Recap and Update

Some people can have nerve pain or discomfort in the area of the shingles rash, months after the rash has gone. This is called "post-herpetic neuralgia".

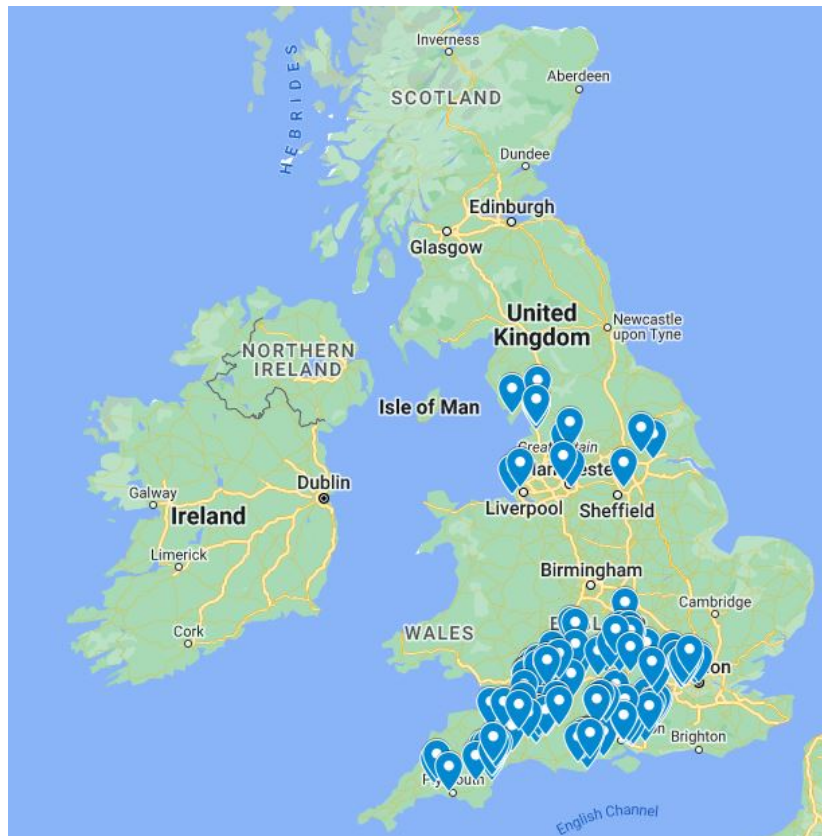


We currently do not have any treatments that prevent this. We hope that the ATHENA Study will help us to find out if taking a low dose of a tablet called Amitriptyline may help prevent it.

We started recruiting in 2022 and now have 415 participants!



We have surgeries recruiting within 10 UK regions. You can view the location of recruiting surgeries via this interactive [map](#) on our website:



"The research team behind the ATHENA study"

By Lorelei Hunt, Patient and Public Involvement Representative on
the ATHENA Study

I have first-hand experience of how unpleasant shingles can be, so I'm pleased to be able to provide a patient's viewpoint on the ATHENA study. Being asked to join a clinical trial may feel like a scary or even slightly risky thing to do, but I wish that everyone who is eligible for the study had the opportunity that I have to see the team behind ATHENA at work ... [\[Link to full article on the website\]](#).



Questionnaires



A BIG thank you to everyone for continuing to complete your questionnaires!

They are sent to you 30, 60, 90, 120, 180 and 360 days after your rash appeared.

Please remember...

- ...to continue to complete the questionnaires even when you aren't taking the medication anymore.
- ... when answering questions about pain to include all kinds of pain or discomfort in the area of your shingles rash, including that triggered by air blowing on the skin, by clothing rubbing against the skin, or by hot or cold temperatures.
- ...to look out for the emailed questionnaires (check your "spam") if you are completing them online, or in the post, if you are completing them on paper.
- ... to complete as many questions as you can and remember to press 'submit' at the end.

You can contact us at athena-study@bristol.ac.uk any point if you have any queries.

THANK YOU!



In the Spotlight



Lyn is an ATHENA Research Nurse based in Bristol.

Lyn says "I am one of the research nurses based in Bristol working on the ATHENA study. When we first started recruiting, we had a number of people phoning us describing how ongoing post-herpetic neuralgia was so debilitating for them. As a child I had chickenpox, so in the future I may well get shingles and potentially post-herpetic neuralgia. Being in the right age group I could also be recruited!! So, it would be good to know as indicated by a small study if a low dose of amitriptyline taken soon after being diagnosed with shingles could prevent this long-term condition.

My holidays are spent scuba diving searching for nudibranchs mainly in Indonesia. It is the only time I don't mind having my photograph taken!"

Keeping in touch

Remember to update us if your email address changes as this is how we will continue to contact you over the coming months.

To let us know if your details have changed you can email us at athena-study@bristol.ac.uk.

You can also stay up to date with us on Twitter: @AthenaStudy or keep yourself informed about study updates on our website: www.athena-study.bristol.ac.uk.



Who we are

Trial Manager: Siân Wells

Administrator: Zoë Wilkins

Qualitative Researcher: Dr Sophie Rees

Research Nurses:

Lyn Liddiard, Anna Gilbertson,
Gill Kirkup, Erin Shearn

A big THANK YOU for your participation and support.



For further information or help:

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Twitter: @AthenaStudy

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