

# Shingles Case Study Competition

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Mr GVL is a 74 year old patient with a pathology museum full of illnesses. Definitely one of the old school with old world manners and charm. A real doctor's delight as a patient. His medical problem list is a nightmare – asthma under control on inhaled steroids, a problematical Wolff Parkinson White syndrome with arrhythmia controlled on Amiodarone (Cordarone). This therapy has given him hypothyroidism and is on replacement therapy for this. In addition, a long complicated urological history with hypospadias, urinary calculi and recurrent infections. Eighteen months ago he had a epiglottic tumour removed. One year ago he developed skin tumours and biopsies of these revealed metastatic carcinoid tumour. Review of the original histology of his Epiglottic tumour revealed this to be the primary source. He has chosen not to undergo chemotherapy, remaining reasonably well and walks a few kilometres every day. He cares for an aged aunt and his sister. Throughout all his trials and tribulations he has remained cheerful, uncomplaining and is always considerate of others, never putting himself first.

One day whilst coming into the rooms for settling of his bills or collecting medicines for his aunt, he asked over the counter, if he should do something about the bite over his eye. He thought something

had bitten him whilst working in the garden. I treated with Floxapen as this appeared to be a furuncle with cellulitis.

That night he experienced severe lancinating pain around his eye and in his head, was unable to sleep and described the pain as unbearable.

The next day was a Sunday and he drove first to the rooms to see if a doctor was on call. (Despite his severe pain and discomfort he would not call out a doctor on the weekend). Fortunately our partner was in the rooms and he made the diagnosis of Herpes Zoster Ophthalmicus. He was only able to obtain 200g tablets of Zovirax which he used five times that day. The Zovirax shingles treatment pack was obtained the next day.

Mr GVL had blisters on his scalp and severe pain and swelling around his right eye. After starting the larger dose of Zovirax, he only experienced one more day of discomfort and severe pain before this subsided. The photo was taken 4 days after starting the 800mg 5 times daily and 7 days after the first appearance of the rash. His scalp was still sensitive to the touch but otherwise he was not in enough pain to warrant analgesics.

The patient was happy that the treatment was worth it as he would not like to experience the same pain again.

