

# How To Treat Shingles With Manuka and Clover Honey

**By Jenny Hill**

According to some sources, shingles rates have been on the increase. The disease, caused by the herpes zoster virus, is closely connected to chickenpox.

In fact, shingles is a re-activation of the chickenpox virus. But unlike chickenpox, which is mainly a mild childhood disease, shingles can cause neurological complications and even death.

Antiviral drugs that treat herpes outbreaks come with side effects. Also, they are not readily available to everyone. A preliminary study now suggests that there might be a natural and effective balm for shingles: [honey](#) or more specifically Manuka and Clover honey.

Honey is very convenient for skin application and can be easily made into an ointment. It has been used widely until the discovery of penicillin to treat infections, and is still praised in wound care. You can also use honey to make [home-made face masks](#) and you can greatly [enhance your health by combining honey and lemon](#).

Not all types of honey are the same. Some are more potent and health-promoting than others. Certain types could even contribute to the spread of microbes, so it's vital to determine which honey is best for each condition.

Also, processed and refined honey should be avoided if your aim is to get healthy. Look for raw, organic honey that is full of goodness and carries the health benefits and avoid [fake honey](#).

## **Treating Shingles With Honey – The Study**

A study that looked into the effectiveness of honey in the treatment of shingles was a collaboration between Professor Randall Cohrs from University of Colorado-Denver, and Dr. Aamir Shahzad, a Pakistani physician with elaborate field experience with shingles from his home country. The two set out to study two specific types of honey – manuka and clover honey.

## **Manuka Honey And Its Health Benefits**

Manuka honey is a unique honey, with pronounced health and wellness properties that have been used for centuries. It triggers a natural non-peroxide antibacterial activity, particular to certain strains of manuka honey only. Manuka bushes (*Leptospermum scoparium*) grow only in New Zealand. They were originally considered an invasive weed, but are now praised, as they provide bees with the nectar that produces one of the world's most valued honeys.

## **Clover Honey And Its Health Benefits**

In contrast, clover honey is the most common type of honey produced in the US. It's made by bees that feed on the nectar of clover plants. Its mild, floral flavor is very popular among consumers, but since this honey comes in different qualities, you need to check its origin and consistency.

## **The Results Of The Study**

The first in-vitro tests were very promising. Both types of honey showed antiviral activity against varicella zoster virus, which causes chickenpox. More tests need to be done to determine the safety, but clover and manuka honey could turn out to be an excellent remedy for shingles.

You can use honey for treating shingles by placing manuka or clover honey on the area of shingles affected skin while making sure that it covers the entire area. You can also use gauze soaked in honey for this purpose. Tie it around the area of shingles and replace with fresh honey every few hours.

Dr. Shahzad explains that the future goal of their joint research is to check the difference in antiviral activity of honey from different geographical locations, and find out honey's exact mechanism of action. He emphasizes that honey should not take precedence over the more effective antivirals, but should definitely be considered in developing countries where access to medication might be scarce.

### **Sources:**

- <http://www.kunc.org/post/sweet-salve-shingles>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3401066>
- <http://www.livestrong.com/article/24619-clover-honey-benefits>