**Case Study - Acute and Chronic Pain: Shingles and post herpetic neuralgia**

**ILOS -** Epidemiology and pathophysiology of shingles and PHN. Shingles prevention study, management, symptomatic analgesia. PHN: pathogenesis, management, prevention and outcome.

**A 60 year old man presents with pain affecting his right chest wall. He mentions that he has recently suffered from shingles in the same region.**

**How would you manage his pain using the RAT approach?**

**Recognise:**

* Dermatomal pain distribution
* May affect trigeminal nerve

**Assess:**

* Severity
  + May be severe
  + How is it affecting him; can he function at work or home?
* Type
  + Acute or chronic
  + Neuropathic
  + Constant or intermittent
  + Non-cancer
  + Associated symptoms or signs: localised vesicular rash, itch, tingling, systemic upset.
* Other factors
  + Risk factors – Increasing age, immune suppression (eg HIV/AIDS, organ transplant, long-term steroid use), comorbid conditions eg diabetes.
  + Complications - Secondary infection, eye, CNS
  + Other painful conditions and analgesic use
  + Mood – depression and anxiety
  + Sleep

**Treat:**

* Non-drug treatments
  + Explanation of cause
  + Psychological treatments: CBT, stress reduction, mindfulness
  + Good sleep hygiene
  + Clothing: loose, non-irritant
  + Cold packs
* Drug treatments
  + Simple analgesics – Paracetamol, codeine, NSAIDs
  + ?Corticosteroids – acute phase (controversial)
  + Anti-neuropathic agents:
    - Topical: Lignocaine 5% patches, Capsaicin (low dose cream or high dose Qutenza patch).
    - Systemic: Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs), Gabapentin, Pregabalin, Duloxetine, Tramadol. Combination therapy may be helpful.
  + Strong opioids (consider specialist Pain Management input)
  + Treatment of mood disorders

**Additional possible discussion points:**

* Prevention of shingles and PHN - vaccination programme (shingles prevention study), early TCA use
* Antiviral treatment in shingles - indications and timing
* NICE guidance
* Managing pain in older adults