

Patient Demographics	Antiviral Agent	Route	Duration of Therapy
>50 years of age, preferably within 72 hours of rash onset	Valacyclovir, Famciclovir, Acyclovir*	Oral	7-10 days
<50 years, within 72 hours of rash onset			
Immunocompromised, irrespective of time from rash onset		Intravenous, then transition to oral	No established guidelines **
Ophthalmic zoster, neurologic involvement, or disseminated zoster, irrespective of time from rash onset		May require intravenous or oral: case dependent	No established guidelines **

* Famciclovir and valacyclovir are the preferred over acyclovir due to their significant reduction of pain, superior pharmacokinetics, and more convenient dosing regimens.¹⁵ Acyclovir is the only antiviral available in intravenous formulation.

**In elderly or immunocompromised patients a prolonged course of therapy may be required.^{8,12}