

What can you do to prevent pressure injuries?

If you are in bed

- ▶ Change your position every two to three hours, moving between your back and sides
- ▶ Use pillows to stop knees and ankles touching each other, particularly when you are lying on your side
- ▶ Try to avoid creases in the bed linen
- ▶ If sitting up in bed, be aware that sliding down the bed can cause a pressure injury to your bottom and heels
- ▶ Ask for assistance if required.



If you are in a wheelchair

- ▶ Relieve pressure by leaning forward, or leaning side to side for a few minutes every half hour.



What else can you do to help?

- ▶ Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty fluids
- ▶ Keep your skin clean and dry
- ▶ Ask your nurse to help you with any incontinence.

Your Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Doctor or Dietitian can help you plan your care to prevent a pressure injury

Pressure injuries can sometimes occur even if everything is being done to prevent them.

Please talk to your nurse if you require more information.

Preventing Pressure Injuries



Skin Care Matters

We are here to help you

What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury is an area of damaged skin and flesh caused by staying in one position for too long (e.g. prolonged sitting or lying).

Pressure injuries are also sometimes known as bed sores, pressure sores, pressure areas or pressure ulcers.

They can develop in a matter of hours and usually begin with the skin changing colour. Pain or discomfort may occur.

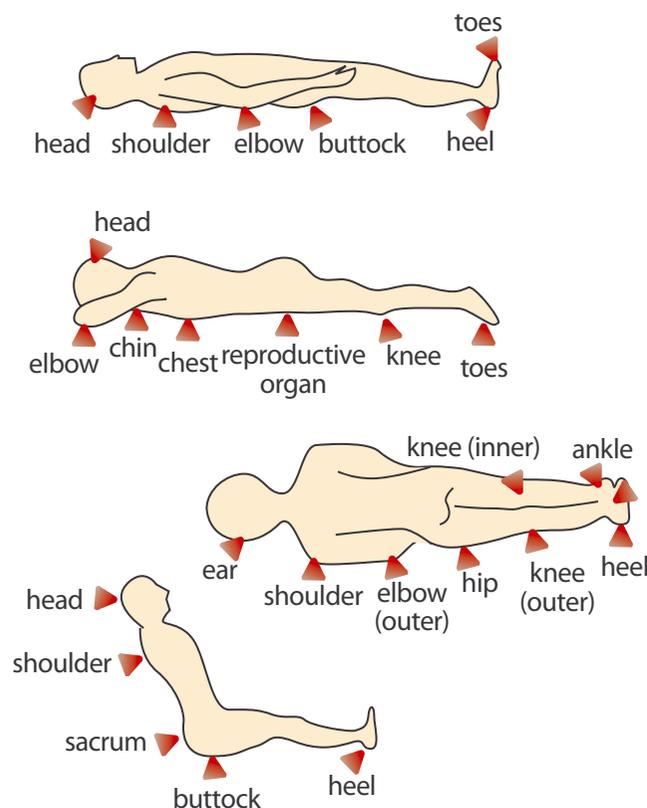


The first sign of a pressure injury can be a discoloured area that does **not** turn white when pressed

If the pressure is not relieved regularly, skin can be damaged ranging from a blister to a deep open wound.

Which parts of your body are most vulnerable?

Pressure injuries develop on parts of the body that take your weight and where the bone is close to the surface.



If any one of these parts starts to hurt, tell your nurse.

Are you at risk of getting a pressure injury?

You are at risk if:

- ▶ You spend long periods of time in bed
- ▶ You are in a wheelchair or you sit for long periods of time in a chair
- ▶ You have difficulty moving about
- ▶ You have a serious illness or had major surgery
- ▶ You are elderly or frail
- ▶ You have damp skin from sweating or incontinence (e.g. difficulty getting to the toilet in time, loss of bladder or bowel control)
- ▶ You have loss of feeling (e.g. due to epidural, diabetes or following a stroke) or poor blood flow
- ▶ You do not eat a balanced diet or have enough fluids to drink.

Despite the risks pressure injuries can be avoided.