



# Pressure Injuries

## Information for Patients, Residents and Carers

### What is a Pressure Injury?

A pressure injury is a localised injury to the skin and/or underlying tissue due to unrelieved **pressure, friction, shear**, or **moisture** or a combination of these factors. Pressure ulcer, decubitus ulcer and bedsore are other terms used for this problem.

While pressure injuries can appear insignificant on the surface, under the skin damage can occur which can spread into surrounding muscles and bones, leading to pain, possible infection, scarring and a delayed recovery.

### Risk is increased with:

- reduced mobility
- altered mental state
- poor nutrition
- incontinence
- reduced sensation
- ill health

### What to look for?

- Red/Purple/Blue skin
- Blisters
- Swelling
- Patches of dry skin and hard skin
- Shiny areas

- Warm or cool areas
- Cracks, calluses, wrinkles
- Localised pain

### Where to look?

Pressure injuries can occur anywhere there is continued pressure to the skin but usually over bony areas – especially the heels, elbows, hips, buttocks and tail bone. Pressure injuries can also be caused by medical devices such as splints, compression hosiery and masks.



## What you can do

- ✓ Change position frequently to prevent pressure damage
- ✓ Use soap-free bathing and cleanser products to help protect your skin from drying out
- ✓ Moisturise your skin twice daily
- ✓ Protect skin exposed to friction, pat skin dry and avoid rubbing
- ✓ Use pillows and foam wedges to protect bony areas
- ✓ Eat a balanced diet including two servings of fruit and five servings of vegetables each day
- ✓ Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water every day
- ✓ Check your skin regularly and contact your health professional or the Wound Innovations team if you have any soreness, reddened, blistered or broken skin.

**Remember – Keep on moving! Look after your skin and eat a healthy diet!**

## What you should NOT do!

- ✗ Do not massage or rub the skin as this causes friction
- ✗ Avoid sitting in a chair or wheelchair for long periods of time
- ✗ Do not use foam rings or donuts as these have been found to cause more pressure
- ✗ Avoid products that irritate the skin. Try unperfumed lotions and avoid talcum powder.

## Contact Information

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## References

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