



Pressure Ulcer Prevention

Clean and Protect

- Keep your skin clean and dry
- Ask for help to get you from the bed to your chair or toilet
- Tell your caregiver if you are wet or have had an accident so they can help you get clean and dry
- Use protective cream to protect your skin from urine or stool
- Moisturize your dry skin

Nutrition

- Be sure to eat a balanced diet
- Drink plenty of fluids

SPEAK OUT!

Alert a member of your care team if you suspect pressure-related breakdown or need assistance to be repositioned. Ask for extra pillows, seat cushions or other equipment we can provide to help keep you safe and make you more comfortable.

While you are in the hospital, your caregivers will help you prevent pressure ulcers by:

- Inspecting your skin daily for redness or signs that sores may be developing
- Keeping your skin clean and dry
- Moisturizing dry skin
- Encouraging you to keep moving or to increase your activity
- Routinely changing your position every 1 to 2 hours if you are not able to move yourself without help
- Protecting your bony areas with pillows or pads
- Keeping your heels off the bed surface with pillows placed under your calves
- Keeping the head of your bed as low as possible to prevent you from sliding down in bed
- Helping you to get from the bed to the chair or toilet
- Using protective cream to protect your skin from urine or stool
- Helping you get a well-balanced diet and adequate fluids
- Informing your doctor if signs of skin breakdown are noticed

You and Your Family Can Help Prevent **PRESSURE ULCERS**



If you have any questions or concerns, ask your doctor or other healthcare provider.

What is a Pressure Ulcer?

A pressure ulcer, or “bed sore,” develops when muscles and soft tissue of the body are squeezed between one of your bones and an outside surface (like a chair or a bed).

Pressure ulcers can range in severity from minor skin reddening to more severe ulcers that can extend down to the muscle and bone.



You may be at a higher risk for developing a pressure ulcer if:

- You stay in a bed or a chair most of the time or are immobile
- You lose control of your bladder and/or bowels
- You do not eat a balanced diet or drink enough fluids
- You are significantly over/underweight
- You have thin, dry or fragile skin
- You need assistance getting out of bed to the commode or bathroom
- You are confused and/or restless
- You take medications that may inhibit your body’s ability to heal
- You take medications that make you sleepy

Skin is your body’s largest organ! What else should you know?

- Urine or stool on the skin can cause it to break down faster
- If you lose control of your bladder or bowels it is very important to:
 - Practice good hygiene
 - Keep skin clean and dry
- Dragging yourself across the bed, sheets or chair can tear your skin

How can you help keep your skin healthy?

- Keep skin clean and dry
- Moisturize dry skin
- Eat a well-balanced diet
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get adequate rest
- Be as active as possible

What can you do at home and while in the hospital to prevent pressure ulcers?

- Inspect your skin daily
- Look for red areas where pressure ulcers often form (tailbone, hips, heels, ankles, elbows, etc.)
- Remain active
- Change your position frequently
- If possible, walk and exercise routinely, or ask your physical therapist to increase your movement and activity

Reduce Pressure:

- Change your position every 1 to 2 hours in bed, more often in a chair
- Try to find comfortable positions that also avoid putting pressure on red or sore spots
- Use pillows to protect bony parts
- Avoid donut-shaped pillows
- Float your heels off your bed or chair surface with a pillow placed under your calves
- Rest with the head of your bed as low as possible to prevent sliding down in bed

Where do Pressure Ulcers Start?

Tailbone
Hip bones
Heels

Ankles
Elbows
Spine

Back of head
Ears
Buttocks

These are just the common locations - they can start anywhere.

