

Prevention of Pressure Injuries – Key Points



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What is a Pressure Injury?

A pressure injury is damage to the skin and below the skin, caused by pressure on the same area for a long time. This pressure can stop the blood going to the area, leading to damaging the tissue.

A pressure injury is also be called a bedsore or ulcer.

What Causes Pressure Injuries?

- **Pressure:** The weight of your body pressing down on a specific area of skin.
- **Shearing:** This is when your skin stays in one place, while your body is moved, causing the skin to stretch and twist. This happens when moving or repositioning while sat down or in bed.

Who is at Risk?

People at risk of pressure injuries include:

- Individuals with bad flexibility or difficulty changing positions
- People who are ill
- People who have less sensation in their skin
- People who have poor control of when you go to the toilet (incontinence)
- People with bad nutrition or weight loss
- People with poor circulation

Common Sites for Pressure Injuries

- Buttocks
- Heels
- Elbows
- Ears
- Spine and hips

Observing Your Skin

- Colour changes: Look for changes in skin colour, such as redness, purple discoloration, or a pale or ashen appearance.
- Swelling: Notice if the area is swollen or hard.
- Blisters: Watch for blisters or broken skin.
- Open wounds: Be aware of any open sores or ulcers.

Preventing Pressure Injuries

- Regular skin checks: Inspect your skin regularly for signs of damage.
- Skin care: Keep your skin clean and dry, using a soap substitute if needed.
- Incontinence management: Address incontinence issues to protect your skin.
- Movement: Change your position frequently to relieve pressure on different areas.
- Nutrition: Eat a healthy diet and stay hydrated.
- Holiday planning: If you're at risk or have an existing pressure injury, discuss your holiday plans with a healthcare professional.

If you have concerns about pressure injuries, consult a healthcare professional for advice and guidance.

We want you and the people who help you to understand what we send. If you need help with this leaflet, please tell us.



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