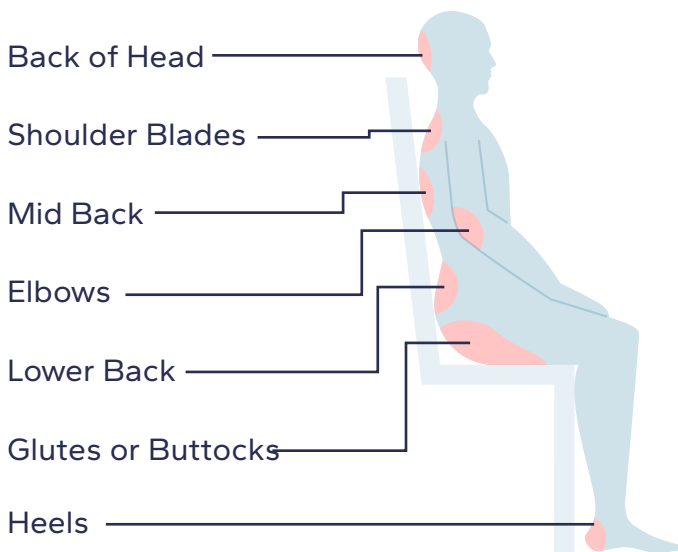


Pressure Injury



What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury is an area of wounded or damaged skin that is often found where your bones are close to the skin's surface, such as the elbows, hips, buttocks, ankles, and heels.

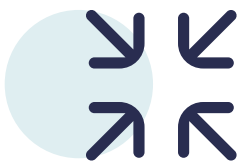


What does “reposition” mean?

A decrease in mobility or the inability to move around easily can happen for many reasons such as getting older, having an accident, nerve damage, and more. This can lead to a build-up in pressure on the skin and cause an injury.

If you or your loved one has difficulty moving, it is important to change positions at least every two hours to help keep blood flowing properly, relieve pressure, and to redistribute the body's weight more evenly. If you cannot move by yourself, ask a caregiver who can help.

How do you care for a pressure injury?



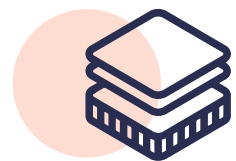
Keep pressure off the area by repositioning yourself or your loved one at least every two hours



Keep the area clean by gently washing with mild soap and water or as instructed to avoid infection



Eat well by choosing proper proteins, vitamins, fluids, and adequate calories to support wound healing and prevent new skin injuries



Use supportive equipment such as a special mattress, a wheelchair cushion to help treat and prevent injury, or a special protective dressing

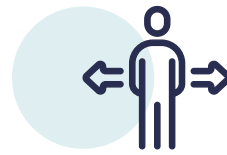
How do I reposition?

If you are in bed, position yourself or your loved one by lying 15-30 degrees to one side of the body with the top leg over the bottom leg and the hip and knee flexed. Place a pillow or positioning device behind the back for support, as well as a pillow between the knees. Alternate from the right, left, and back sides.

Ensure that you take special care to relieve pressure from “bony” parts of the body such as the elbows, hips, buttocks, ankles, and heels to make certain medical devices such as tubes or braces do not pinch or constrict the skin. Make sure you or your loved one are not lying on a medical device that could cause a pressure injury.

If you or your loved one use a wheelchair and have sufficient upper body strength, weight shifts are recommended to relieve pressure on the skin. One technique is the wheelchair push-up. Push up using the armrests until the buttocks are off the seat and your arms are fully extended. Hold this position for fifteen seconds, once every fifteen minutes, or as your clinician recommends.

How can I prevent a pressure injury?



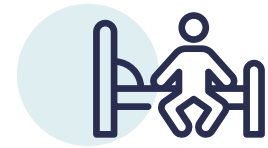
Move around frequently and reposition while in bed or in a chair



Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids to keep your skin healthy



Keep your skin clean, dry, and cool, because moisture from sweat or other bodily fluids is a risk factor for pressure injury development



Be careful when moving in and out of bed to prevent skin dragging across sheets or sliding down a chair which can increase the likelihood of skin injury

When should I call for help?

If you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Your pressure injury increases in size or amount of drainage
- Redness or black spots begin to appear in or around the wound
- An abnormal smell from the ulcer or the drainage becomes discolored such as yellow, white, tan, or green
- You develop a fever, sweats, chills, or pain

Have Questions or Need Help?

Talk with your Clinical Care Team. **Call 1-833-ESPERTA (1-833-377-3782).**

If this is an emergency, go to your nearest hospital or call 911.

1. Bryant, R.A., & Nix, D.P. (2024). Acute and chronic wounds: current management concepts. 6th. edition. Elsevier.

2. Wisconsin Technical College System website (n.d.). Nursing fundamentals. Open Resources. <https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/nursingfundamentals/chapter/10-4-pressure-injuries/>

3. Wound Reference Inc. (2024). <https://woundreference.com/app/>