

## Pressure Injuries

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
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*Information for  
patients, families and  
caregivers*

## What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury is a damage to the skin and underlying tissue caused by unrelieved pressure. The pressure injury can happen when your skin presses against a surface, such as a mattress or wheelchair seat, for too long. The pressure on the blood vessels reduces blood flow to your skin resulting in a wound.

Pressure injuries usually develop over bony prominences such as the tailbone, shoulders, elbows, hips and heels, as well under medical devices, such as respiratory equipment, stockings, tubes, splints and casts.

Pressure injuries vary in severity and can cause discomfort, pain and infection.

### Pressure injuries are more likely to develop in people who:

- Are bedridden or in a wheelchair
- Have had a pressure injury before
- Have an injury or disease that keeps them from moving normally
- Have a condition that makes them sleepy or drowsy
- Have weak control of their bladder and/or bowel functions (have incontinence issues)
- Are malnourished and/ or dehydrated

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT PRESSURE INJURIES?

### Skin care

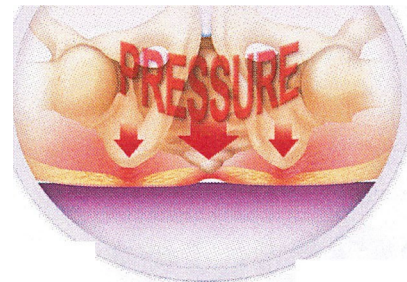
- Check your skin daily for any changes in colour and for any new blisters or sores
- Make sure to check under and around any medical devices and between skin folds
- Keep your skin clean and moisturized
- Use gentle cleansers and skin protectants routinely if you are incontinent
- Do not rub or massage bony areas

### Repositioning

- It is recommended to change positions every two hours when you are in bed if possible

### Pressure offloading

- Use special cushions to redistribute pressure (e.g. chair cushion)
- Use pressure offloading boots to protect heels



## WHAT WE WILL DO TO PREVENT PRESSURE INJURIES?

### Skin care:

- Will inspect your skin daily
- Will check skin under or around medical devices every shift
- Will adjust any medical devices and braces as needed to avoid pressure injuries
- Will keep your skin clean and dry
- Will use gentle cleansers and skin protectants if you are incontinent
- Will moisturize skin

### Wound care

- Will inspect and change wound dressing regularly

### Repositioning

- Will help you reposition every two hours
- Will encourage you to shift weight every 15-30 minutes while you are in a wheelchair or chair

### Pressure offloading

- May recommend you to use a special mattress or chair cushion
- Will use pillows or special pressure of floating devices for heels protection

### Nutrition

- Will evaluate your nutrition and consult a dietician if needed