



Preventing Pressure Ulcers

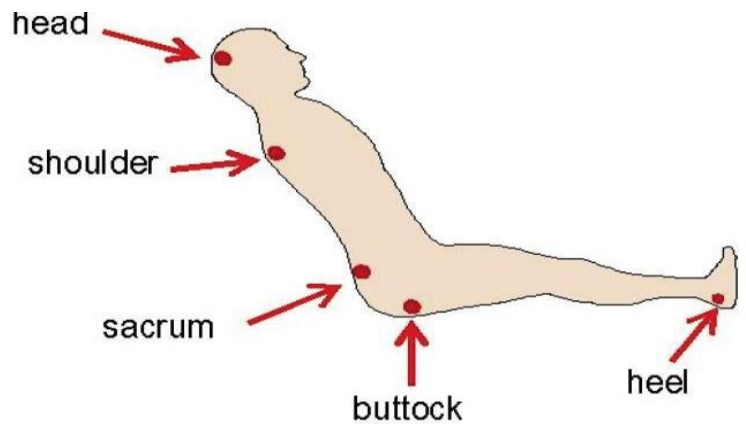
If you care for a family member or friend who has to spend a lot of time in bed or seated, it is important to be aware of the risk of pressure ulcers. Pressure ulcers can develop very quickly in some people if the person is unable to move for even a very short time.

Guys and St Thomas' Tissue Viability Nurses have developed guidance to help you understand what a pressure ulcer is, how to prevent them from occurring, and what to look for.

The Facts

- Pressure ulcers can affect people of any age, especially those that are unwell.
- If the pressure is not relieved regularly, skin can become damaged, ranging from a blister to a deep open wound.
- Most pressure ulcers are preventable.
- Pressure ulcers may cause pain, infection and serious illness.
- Early identification will prevent long periods of discomfort and treatment.

Know your pressure points

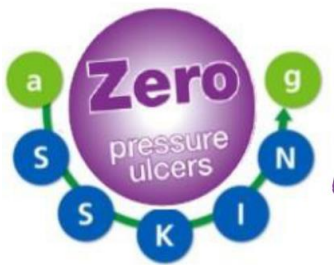


Identify the warning signs



Check areas of redness with the blanching/non-blanching technique

- Press an area with your thumb for 2 seconds then release.
- If area remains red, reposition off the affected area and report to GP or Nurse.
- This is harder to detect on darker skin tones
- Check these areas. Are they discoloured? Are they harder? Or are they warm/cool to the touch?



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How can you help?

- **Skin** - regularly check the skin, whilst undertaking personal care, please check for redness over any bony area. Early inspection means early detection.
- **Surface** - make sure they have the right support and/ or equipment. Remember to take this with you wherever you go.
- **Keep moving** - Reposition regularly.
- If **Incontinent**, keep skin clean and dry.
- **Nutrition** - the right diet and plenty of fluids are essential for skin health.
- Give information/education to everyone involved

Prevent this



If you want to access quick guide videos and training to help you spot signs of deterioration in the health of those you care for early and prevent pressure ulcers from occurring, download Care City iCare from the Google PlayStore or App Store.

You can also use the [pressure ulcer triggers tool](#) for carers to help you keep track of any changes to the skin.



Please help me move

Provide support if your family member is not independent with repositioning

If you are in bed:

- Change your position every 2-3 hours, moving between your back and your sides.
- Use pillows to stop knees and ankles from touching each other, particularly when you are lying on your side
- Try to avoid creases in the bed linen
- If you are sitting up in bed, be aware that sliding down the bed can cause a pressure injury to your bottom and heels
- Ask for assistance and / or equipment if required



If you are in a wheelchair:

- Relieve the pressure by leaning forward, or leaning side to side for a few minutes every half hour.
- Ensure appropriate pressure relieving equipment has been assessed and provided – ask for assistance in getting this equipment if required.



If you are concerned please inform your GP or community nurse