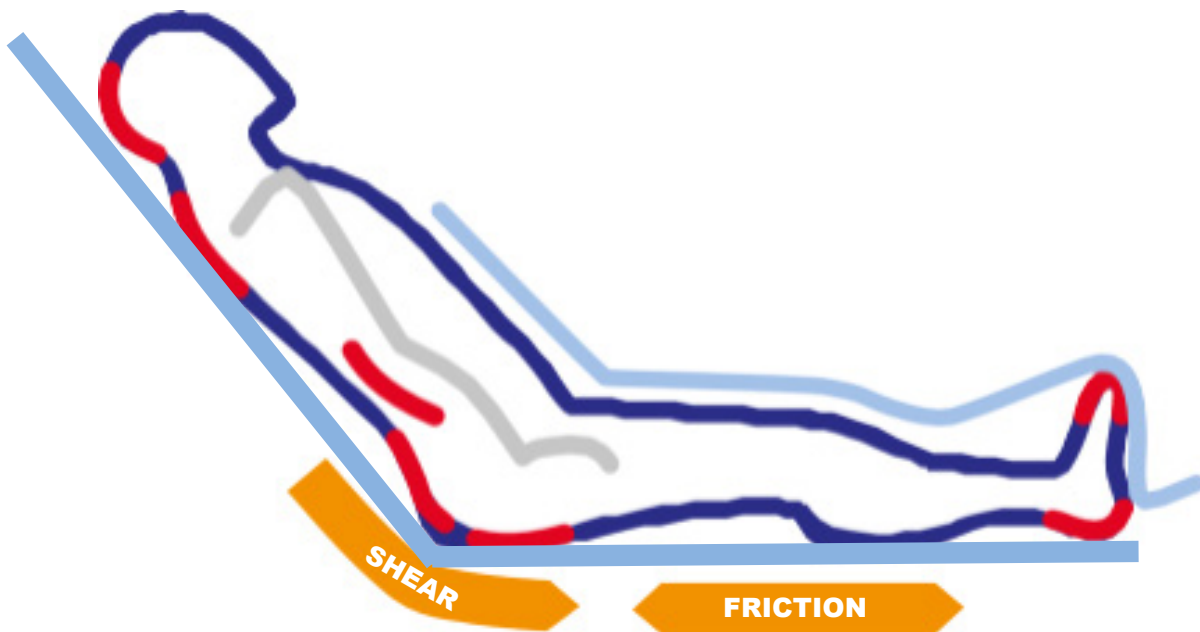




Tissue Viability

How to Prevent Pressure Ulcers

Information for Patients, Families and Carers



This booklet will explain what pressure ulcers (sometimes known as bedsores or pressure sores) are and describe the common causes and steps that can be taken to reduce them.

A pressure ulcer can seriously impact the quality of your life and it's important to understand whether you may be at risk, so you can help prevent one from developing.

What is a pressure ulcer?

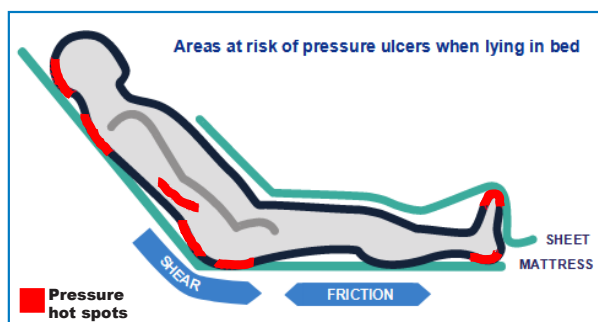
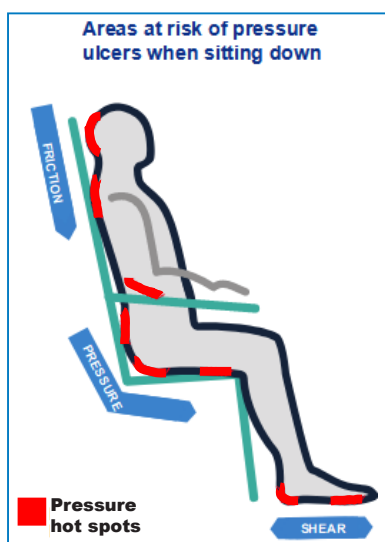
A pressure ulcer is an area of damage to the skin and underlying tissue.

The first sign that a pressure ulcer may be forming is usually discoloured skin. This may present as areas of redness in those with lighter skin tones or purple/blue areas in those with darker skin tones. This may get progressively worse and eventually lead to an open wound.

The most common places for pressure ulcers to occur are over bony prominences (where bones are close to the surface of the skin).



The images show areas where pressure ulcers can often form:



What to expect when you are admitted to Hospital



ASSKING

Assessment To assess your risk of developing pressure ulcers, a member of your healthcare team will examine your skin when you're admitted and ask you some questions.

Surface Your mattress and seating will be assessed to ensure they meet your individual needs.

Skin Early inspection means early detection. Your skin will be assessed frequently to check it remains healthy. How often your skin will be examined depends on your level of risk and your general health.

Keep moving You will be encouraged to change position and/or mobilise frequently. A member of the healthcare team will assist you if you are unable to do this independently. Changing position prevents pressure damage as this allows blood flow to return to the area.

Incontinence Good personal hygiene is important as moisture can cause skin to break down. You may be given a cream to protect your skin from excess moisture.

Nutrition Drinking plenty of fluids and having a good balanced diet is essential for maintaining healthy skin and aiding wound healing. You may be referred to a dietician for nutritional support.

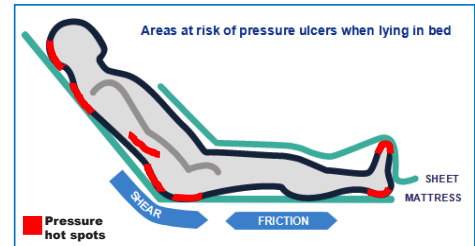
Give Information Please discuss any concerns with your nurse.

Who is at risk of developing a pressure ulcer?

Anyone, whatever their age or mobility, can develop a pressure ulcer but some people are at greater risk than others.

You may be at greater risk if you:

- currently have a pressure ulcer or have had one in the past
- are unable to move certain parts of your body, or change position by yourself
- are seriously ill or undergoing surgery
- have had an injury, for example a broken hip
- have conditions such as diabetes, stroke and nerve or muscle disorders that may reduce sensitivity to pain and discomfort
- have had a procedure or use medications which may reduce your ability to move and your sensitivity to pain
- have a poor appetite/diet or do not drink enough fluids
- have a plaster of Paris cast applied to a limb
- are elderly or very young
- have existing broken skin
- have poor circulation
- are incontinent of urine and/or faeces
- experiencing pain



Causes

Pressure ulcers develop when the blood supply to an area of skin is disrupted.

A lack of blood supply means that oxygen and nutrients don't reach the area as they should, and this causes the skin to break down and an ulcer to form.

They occur when the weight of the body presses down on the skin for a length of time. They are more likely to occur if a person must stay in bed, a chair or a wheelchair for long periods of time or unable to move around / change position easily.

In addition to continued pressure on an area, the following may contribute to pressure ulcer formation:

- sliding or slumping down the bed or chair – this can damage the skin and the deep layers of tissue underneath (known as 'shearing')
- poor moving and handling methods can remove the top layers of skin and create friction, which if applied repeatedly can increase the risk of pressure damage.

The early signs of pressure damage

You may notice one or more of the following:

- changes in skin colour (turning red, dark blue, purple)
- a feeling of heat or cold in the area
- swelling
- discomfort or pain
- blistering
- other skin damage

If you notice any of the symptoms above, please speak to a member of the healthcare team.



If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

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If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
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اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم
المذكور أعلاه"