

What can I do to decrease my risk of developing a pressure injury?

Shift your body to a new position at least every two hours while in bed to help reduce the pressure on any one body part.

Avoid lying for long periods of time on bony areas such as your hip or tailbone and avoid direct contact between bony areas such as your ankles and knees.

Keep the head of the bed at the lowest position allowed based on your medical condition.

Use devices such as pillows or wedges to raise your heels off the bed surface.

Keep skin clean, dry and moisturized. Protect your skin from moisture by visiting the bathroom regularly and/or changing your incontinence pad frequently.

Eat a well balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids to keep skin healthy and hydrated.

What will staff do to help decrease my risk of a pressure injury?

Staff will:

- reposition you at least every two hours if you cannot reposition yourself
- encourage you to remain mobile while in hospital or will assist you to get mobile as soon as possible
- supply and use equipment such as special seating cushions, transfer devices, pillows, wedges, specialized footwear or mattresses, where appropriate
- perform regular inspections of your skin
- provide regular toileting or incontinence care as needed and use barrier sprays, creams and incontinence pads to prevent moisture from damaging your skin
- Arrange a nutritional consult for any patient who is having difficulty consuming adequate nutrition

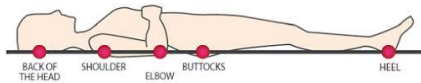


Pembroke Regional Hospital

A Patient's Guide to Awareness and Prevention of a Pressure Injury

What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury, also known as a bed sore, is a change or break in the skin caused by constant pressure, especially over a bony area such as the ankle, tailbone, hip, elbow, heel, ear or the back of the head.



How does a pressure injury develop?

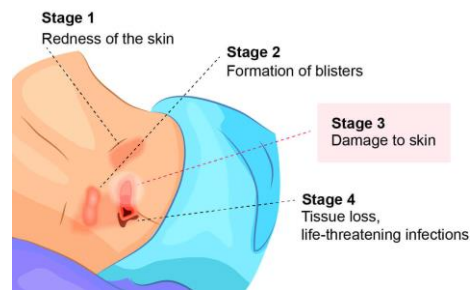
Pressure injuries develop when a person stays for too long in one position without moving. Blood flow is reduced to the area experiencing pressure and the tissue is starved of nutrients, and is possibly damaged enough to cause an injury.

A pressure injury may develop over a short or long period of time depending on how much pressure is on the body part.

A pressure injury may also develop when the body is rubbed, dragged or slid against a surface such as bed sheets.

What does a pressure injury look like?

A pressure injury can appear simply as a red area on the skin or as a blister or as an open sore. It may also have the appearance of a deep purplish coloured bruise.



Am I at risk of developing a pressure injury?

If you answer "NO" to any one of the following questions, you MAY be at risk for developing a pressure injury:

- Do you have sensation in all parts of your body?
- Are you capable of moving all the parts of your body?
- Is your skin moist, but not too moist?
- Are you adequately nourished?

Who is at risk for developing a pressure injury?

- Anyone who is unable to move all or part of their body
- Anyone with cognitive or sensory impairments i.e. patients who have suffered a stroke, have dementia, paraplegics, diabetics with neuropathy, or who are receiving medications to reduce their ability to sense pain or discomfort
- Anyone with impaired communication skills
- Anyone who spends long periods sitting or lying down
- Anyone whose nutritional intake is inadequate
- Anyone whose skin is frequently moist from urinary or fecal incontinence or perspiration

