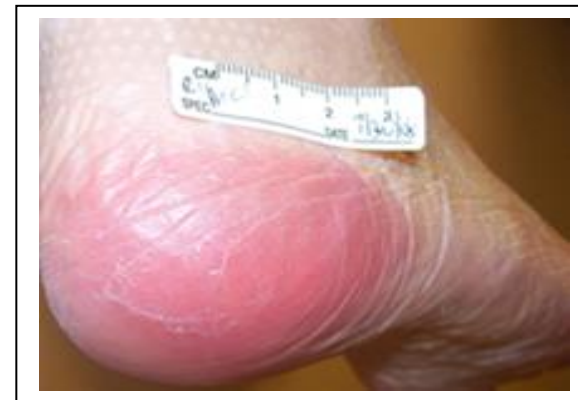


Pressure ulcer prevention



Pressure ulcers, sometimes known as ‘bed sores’ or ‘pressure sores’ happen when pressure builds up and damages the skin, especially over bony areas. The blood supply to the skin and deeper layers of tissue is stopped, and pressure damage can occur.

This leaflet explains what you, your relatives and carers can do to help prevent pressure ulcers and how to check your own skin.

TeamC0mms1 Useful contact numbers:

General practitioner (GP)

District nurses

Community matrons.....

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats, please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01535 294019

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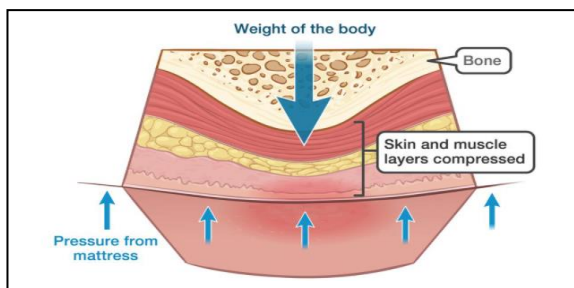
Skin inspection – for early detection of skin damage

Pressure damage is found over bony areas especially on the spine, back of head, ears, nose, shoulder blades, elbows, hips, bottom, ankles, knees, heels, toes.

Where possible check skin twice daily and look out for the following, especially over bony areas:

- Any changes in skin colour – red patches on light skin and bluish/purple patches on dark skin.
- A bluish/purple bruise like discolouration may indicate possible damage to the deeper layers.
- Any swelling, hard lump, squishy area of the skin, discomfort, or pain.
- The area feeling hot to the touch or cooler than surrounding skin, the skin may itch too.
- Any blisters, either clear fluid or blood filled.
- Any kind of damage/changes to your skin could increase the risk of developing a pressure ulcer.

Dry skin should be moisturized to keep it in good condition and reduce the risk of skin damage.



It is important to contact your nursing team if you have any concerns or see any signs of skin damage. Without care, a pressure ulcer can become very serious and may lead to damage of the muscle, tendon, or bone underneath the skin. Pressure damage can take a long time to heal, and a serious pressure ulcer could lead to life threatening infections.

Struggling to check? A mirror is a great way to check areas that are hard to see such as your bottom or back.

If you have **Diabetes** this can affect the condition of your skin and slow down the healing process. Remember to check your feet and ensure that footwear isn't too tight.

Equipment - Ensure that you are using the loan equipment e.g., cushion, mattress, where provided. If you have any concerns speak with your nursing team. Please remember any equipment no longer used should be returned to the equipment store at BACES, the nursing team can arrange this.

Keep moving – Regular position changes are one of the best ways of preventing pressure damage. If you are unable to do this yourself, your carer/relative can help. Please ask your nursing team for advice around correct sitting and lying positions, how to keep a good posture and support your heels.

Incontinence – Keep skin clean and dry, use non-perfumed skin products, pat skin dry and don't rub.

Nutrition – Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids to keep skin in a healthy condition.

If you are concerned about your skin, please speak to a health care professional or your carer.

You can also visit our website and watch our video which will provide you with more information about pressure ulcers and how to prevent them.

<https://www.bdct.nhs.uk/services/tissue-viability-service/>