About pressure injuries

A pressure injury (also called a ‘bed sore’ or ‘ulcer’) is a painful wound that affects the skin and the flesh under it.

Your skin may:
• look blistered
• change colour, usually to red
• feel hard or puffy
• feel warm
• break or split.

Your skin needs blood flow to be healthy. If you sit or lie in a chair a lot, over time the weight on the bony parts of your body stops blood from flowing.

Pressure injuries can show up over bony areas like:
• buttocks
• heels
• toes.

Other things can affect your skin:
• diabetes
• loss of bowel or bladder control
• numbness or spinal injury
• poor food choices.

What to do?

1. MOVE, MOVE, MOVE!
• Keep active – change how you sit or lie often. Even small body shifts help.
• Avoid sitting up in bed for long periods. This puts pressure on your tailbone.
• Ease sore spots with an air mattress, cushions, pillows or booties.
Staff will help if you can’t do these things yourself.

2. CHECK YOUR SKIN
• Is your skin red, blistered, or broken?
• Do you have any pain near a bony area?
• Are your bed or clothes damp?
Talk with your pharmacy about using:
• mild (pH-neutral) soaps
• water-based creams.

DO NOT rub or massage bony parts of your body.
DO NOT use anything that will dry out your skin, like oils, powders or talc.

3. EAT RIGHT
Eat a healthy and nutritious diet.
If you have diabetes:
• check your blood glucose levels
• keep them in the normal range.

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