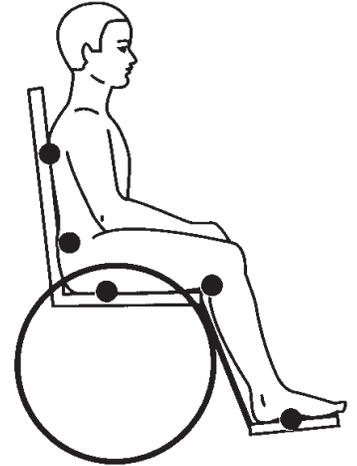
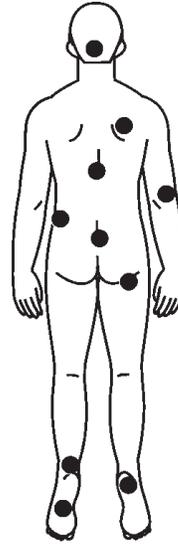
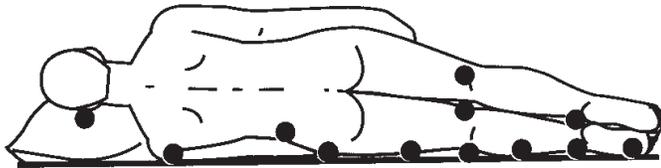


# Preventing Pressure Injuries



Pressure injuries can happen anywhere on the body where there is pressure or rubbing (commonly occurring over the bony areas shown in the diagrams above).

## What is a pressure injury?

Pressure injuries are sometimes called bed sores or pressure ulcers. A pressure injury happens when you sit or lie on one spot too long. When your skin is pressed against bone the blood supply is cut off and damage to the skin and tissue occurs.

## What am I looking for?

- Check your skin every day. You may need a mirror or someone to help you.
- Look at the areas where pressure injuries can form or where you have had a pressure injury.
- Look for areas that are red, bruised, blistered or open.
- Injured skin may feel hot, achy or itchy.
- Injured skin may feel swollen or tender.
- There may be fluid weeping from the injured skin.

## What do I do if I think I have a pressure injury?

The red, purple or maroon area, blister or break in the skin shows that skin damage has occurred. **Do not** ignore the injury.

- Stay off the area.
- Think about what may have caused the injury and fix/remove if possible.
- Ask to be seen by an occupational therapist (OT) or physical therapist (PT).
- Ask to be seen by a home health nurse if you have a blister or break in your skin.
- Go and see your doctor.

OTs and PTs are trained to help you with a plan to stop pressure injuries. They may:

- Show you special cushions, mattresses and other items you can use to decrease pressure.
- Fit your wheelchair to decrease pressure points.
- Suggest better footwear.

<b>Healthlink BC</b> <b>Call 8-1-1</b> <a href="http://www.healthlinkbc.ca">www.healthlinkbc.ca</a>	Nurse	24 hours a day	Daily	<i>Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, ask a dietitian about nutrition, or a pharmacist about your medication.</i>
	Dietitian	9 am–5 pm	Mon–Fri	
	Pharmacist	5 pm–9 am	Daily	
	Hearing Impaired	Call 7-1-1		

## Who gets pressure injuries?

You are at risk if you:

- Have already had a pressure injury.
- Sit in a wheelchair or lie in bed for a long time.
- Have lack of feeling from a spinal cord injury or stroke.
- Have poor circulation.
- Have problems with memory.
- Do not eat well.
- Do not change your sitting or lying position.
- Have fragile skin, swelling or bruising.
- Have wet skin from sweat, urine or stool.
- Are over or under weight.

## How do I keep my skin healthy?

- Move your body every 15 minutes when you are sitting and when you are in bed.
- Turn your body every 2–4 hours when you lie in a bed.
- Avoid positions that press on red, bruised, blistered or open areas.
- Keep your heels from rubbing or resting on the bed.
- Eat healthy meals.
- Drink lots of water.
- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- Wash your skin with water, unscented mild soap and a soft cloth. Pat your skin dry.
- Moisten your skin with unscented lotions twice a day.
- Be active.
- Exercise and move as much as you are able.
- If you smoke, try to quit or cut down.

## If you have any questions, contact your nurse, occupational therapist, physical therapist or dietitian.

Developed by the BC Provincial Interprofessional Skin & Wound Committee in collaboration with Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Registered Dietitians and Wound Clinicians from:



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



Better health. Best in health care.



Every person matters



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