WHAT ARE PRESSURE INJURIES?

Once called bedsores, pressure injuries are localized damage to the skin and underlying soft tissue. They usually form over bony prominences (like the tailbone and heels) or in relation to medical devices (like a breathing tube that presses on the face).

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PRESSURE INJURIES

Talk with your healthcare provider and visit the National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel online at npiap.org to learn more about pressure injuries.

LEARN MORE ABOUT PRESSURE INJURIES.

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Have you ever noticed that sitting in the same position can get uncomfortable over time? That’s your cue to change positions. But if you’re unable to move or adjust, constant pressure is put on your skin, which restricts blood flow. Without adequate blood flow, the skin and tissue beneath the skin can die and wounds called pressure injuries can form.

**CREATING A PLAN**

If you or your loved one is at risk for a pressure injury or develops a pressure injury, talk with your healthcare provider to make a plan. These plans address a variety of factors that can weaken the skin.

**MOVEMENT & COMFORT**

Healthcare providers and caregivers may help you change positions at regular intervals. You may need to use a special bed or cushion that helps protect your skin. Your healthcare provider also will consider any appropriate medications.

**SKIN CARE & CLEANSING**

Beyond properly washing and drying your skin, it’s important to manage your sweat, and bladder and bowel habits. Gently wash—don’t scrub—your skin with a soft sponge or cloth. Your healthcare provider may recommend special cleansers and barrier products.

**DIET & NUTRITION**

Proper nutrition helps keep skin and muscles strong, which helps prevent pressure injuries and promotes healing if a pressure injury occurs.

- **Calories.** Without enough calories, you may lose muscle mass and weight.
- **Protein.** Increased protein intake can help pressure injuries heal. Protein repairs and maintains tissue and muscle.
- **Amino Acids.** These are the building blocks of protein. The amino acids arginine and glutamine are critical in wound healing.
- **Fluids.** Staying hydrated ensures nutrients are spread throughout your body.
- **Vitamins & Minerals.** Many vitamins and minerals are associated with healing.

**UNDERSTANDING YOUR RISK**

You may be at risk for pressure injuries if:

- You must stay in bed or can’t move because of an illness or medical condition.
- You can’t move because it’s too painful.
- You are going to have surgery that might last 3+ hours.
- You use a wheelchair or sit for long periods of time.