

PREVENTING PRESSURE INJURY



If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter.

From home contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 13 1450.

Services are provided free of charge. Ask staff if this information is available in your preferred language.

What is a pressure injury?

- A pressure injury, commonly known as a pressure sore or bed sore, is an area of skin and underlying tissue that has been damaged due to constant unrelieved pressure.
- This pressure causes damage to the blood vessels in the tissues resulting in poor blood flow and tissue break down.
- Pressure injuries can develop quickly and may be difficult to treat, increase your time in hospital and can lead to serious complications.

Eastern Health is committed to reducing your risk of developing a pressure injury.

Where do pressure injuries occur?

Pressure injuries usually occur over bony areas, especially the tailbone (coccyx), heels, buttocks (ischium) and toes.

Who is at risk of pressure injuries?

Unrelieved pressure is the main cause of pressure injury. For this reason those at highest risk are those confined to a bed or a chair and unable to move independently or have limited movement.

In addition risk factors include

- Loss of sensation and poor circulation e.g. people with diabetes
- Poor diet and/or fluid intake
- Skin that is constantly moist through perspiration or loss of bowel / bladder control
- Illnesses you may have
- Weight
- Inability to hold correct body alignment

Assessing your risk

In hospital, staff will repeatedly assess your risk of developing a pressure injury. This is called a “risk assessment “

It involves:

- An examination of your skin
- Questions about your general health
- Your ability to move independently

Together, the best plan to prevent or reduce your risk of getting a pressure injury can be put in place.

This plan may include

- The use of special equipment such as cushions, air mattresses and booties to reduce the pressure over “bony areas”
- Regular turning /repositioning
- Involvement of other health professionals such as a dietitian, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and podiatrist

How you and your family can help

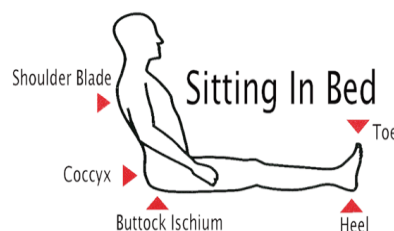
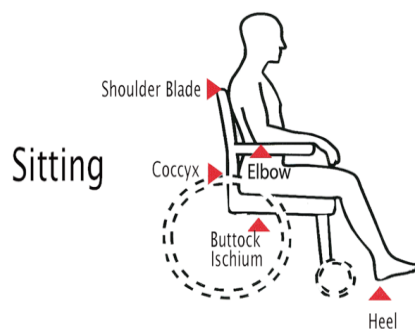
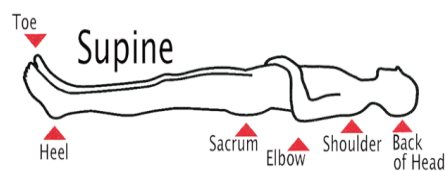
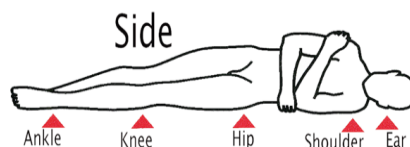
Keep moving - it is most important to move as much as you can so that “bony areas” are relieved of pressure.

- When you are unwell, or less mobile, it can be difficult to move around by yourself. It is essential that someone helps you to change your position regularly
- Avoid sliding down or dragging up the bed or chair
- Avoid massage of your skin over bony parts of the body
- Use a skin cleanser which is designed to maintain normal pH.5.5.
- Moisturise dry skin daily
- Eat a healthy diet and keep hydrated

Tell the nurse

- If you currently have a pressure injury or have had one in the past, so that extra precautions can be taken
- If you develop any tenderness or soreness over a bony area, or if you notice any reddened, blistered or broken skin areas
- **If your clothes or bedding are damp or soiled. It is important to keep your skin clean and dry. Moisture, urine and faeces can damage skin**

Common Pressure Injury Points



Please talk to your nurse if you would like more information or the Eastern Health call centre 1300 342 255

Protecting Your Privacy

Eastern Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and will disclose information about you only when required by law. We comply with relevant information and privacy legislation. If you would like more information, please ask a staff member or visit our Web site www.easternhealth.org.au Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.

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