

Pressure Injury PREVENTION teaching cards

This is a resource for staff to teach consumers and whānau about SSKIN and pressure injury prevention in the community, aged residential care or hospital setting.

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Authorised by: Canterbury and
West Coast PI Prevention Advisory Group

This resource is available from health.govt.nz.

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

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1 – What is a pressure injury?

Pressure injuries are also sometimes known as bed sores, pressure sores, pressure areas or pressure ulcers.

A Pressure Injury is an area of damaged skin and flesh (often over a bony prominence) that can develop in a matter of hours and usually begins with the skin changing colour, pain or discomfort.

Pressure Injuries can be caused by:

- not moving
- friction or shear
- with moisture



2 - When are you at risk of a Pressure Injury?

If you...

- stay in one position for too long
- slide across on your bottom
- don't lift your heels when in your bed
- slide down in your chair
- have fragile skin that looks like it will tear easily
- have difficulty walking, moving around in a chair or rolling over in bed
- experience numbness or tingling in your legs or feet

continues pto...

2a - When are you at risk of a Pressure Injury?

If you...

- have unintended weight loss or are not eating
- have problems breathing
- sweat a lot or have a high temperature
- notice increasing problems with your memory or getting confused
- experience urine or bowel leakage or accidents
- have medical equipment such as catheters, plaster casts or oxygen tubing, clothing seams or straps that rub or leave marks
- wear footwear that is tight or rubbing on any part of your skin

3 - How to protect your skin

- You can make sure skin is clean and pat it dry, including skin folds
- Gently moisturise skin twice a day and accept help from family members or carers
- Try to protect legs with trousers or long skirts. Especially when going out e.g. the garden, in the supermarket, getting in and out of a car
- Check seams are not cutting or digging into skin, especially your underwear and footwear



4 - What is S.S.K.I.N

- The **S**urface of the chair/bed
- Check your **S**kin
- **K**eeP moving
- Avoid **I**ncontinence or moisture
- Improve **N**utrition



5 - Improve the **S**urface of the chair/bed

1. Prevent slipping down in your chair. Ensure your feet sit on the floor with your bottom against the back so your legs are at 90-degree angle
2. If you are uncomfortable in the chair or bed, change position
3. If you are having problems with discomfort or slipping please contact your health professional
4. Any specialist equipment not functioning properly needs to be reviewed by your health professional.
5. For the equipment to help try not to use blankets, towels etc on the top of the mattress/cushion.
6. Avoid crossing your legs



6 - Check your Skin

These are the most common areas on your body to check for pressure or damage

You can prevent a pressure injury if you catch any changes early and let your health professional know. It is important to catch pressure injuries early.

A painful bottom, hip, heel or toes may be an early pressure injury.

Check the areas of skin especially if they are uncomfortable.

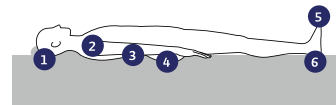
Use a mirror to check your skin or get someone to check for you.

Check bony areas, skin folds and under any medical equipment you might use.

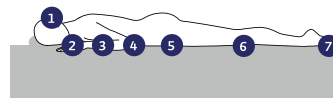
Make sure things like oxygen tubing, catheters or plaster casts are not too tight or pulling/rubbing.

- 1 Head
- 2 Shoulders
- 3 Elbows
- 4 Bottom
- 5 Toes
- 6 Heels

On your back



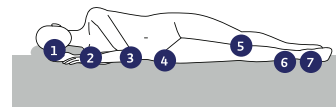
On your front



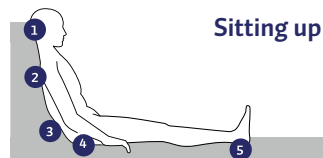
- 1 Head
- 2 Chin
- 3 Chest
- 4 Elbow
- 5 Genitals
- 6 Knee
- 7 Toes

- 1 Ear
- 2 Shoulder
- 3 Elbow (outer)
- 4 Hip
- 5 Knee (inner/outer)
- 6 Ankle
- 7 Heels

On your side



Sitting up



- 1 Head
- 2 Shoulder
- 3 Lower back
- 4 Bottom
- 5 Heels

6a - Check your skin - what to look for

Look for skin changes, skin may be:

- A different colour
- Increase in temperature
- Boggy/squishy and/or hard
- Broken or grazed

To keep your skin healthy, moisturise any dry or cracked skin

If you have had any pressure injuries or wounds before, check these areas too as scars can break down easily.



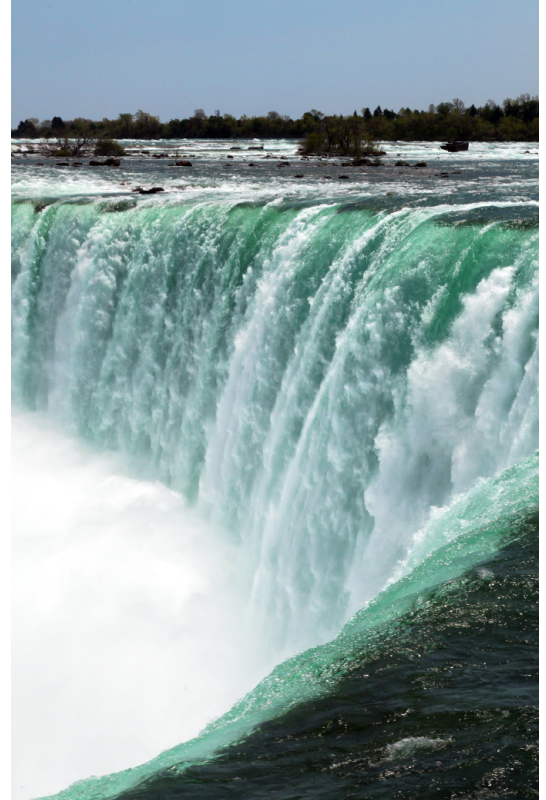
7 - Keep Moving

- Change your position often
- Make sure you take walks frequently to help your skin recover from the pressure
- If walking is difficult stand for a minute or two, walk on the spot
- Lean forward in your chair to take the pressure off or try to lift your bottom to relieve the pressure
- Equipment can help you move without causing damage to the outside and inside layers of the skin. For example hoists, sliding sheets etc
- Slings should fit correctly and provide support, sliding sheets should be used properly by anyone who helps you
- If you have a slide sheet, check you are using this correctly



8 - Avoid Incontinence or moisture

- Urine and bowel problems can cause skin damage
- Make sure pads and pants for urine leakage fit well and are not too tight
- Please talk to your health professional so they can help you
- Keep your skin clean and dry and moisturise it
- If you have concerns about your skin and incontinence, talk to your health professional.



9- Nutrition

- Healthy foods and plenty of fluids can help to protect your skin which helps stop pressure injuries
- If you are not eating healthy food or you don't think you are eating or drinking enough please contact your health professional
- For more advice go to healthinfo.org.nz



10 - How you can avoid a heel pressure injury

- Avoid dry skin and cracked heels by keeping skin moisturised
- Make sure you use fitted footwear that is not too loose so they rub and not too tight that they cause pressure
- If you have pain in bed at night that improves with hanging your leg/s over the side of the bed you need to contact your health professional. There could be a problem with your circulation.
- If you have numbness or tingling or can't feel your feet you need to contact your health professional

11 - Signs of an infection

A pressure injury wound can become infected.

If you have any of the following symptoms contact your health professional

If you have any of these signs you may have an infection and will need treatment from your doctor urgently

- The area becomes painful or pain gets worse

- The area has more ooze, it smells or it changes colour
- If you feel your wound is getting worse
- If the size of the wound has increased
- If you are feeling unwell OR you have a high temperature and a fast pulse

12 - Where to find more information:

ACC guidance on preventing pressure injuries:

<https://www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injury/helping-prevent-pressure-injuries>

New Zealand Wound Care Society - Pressure Injury Resources:

<https://nzwcs.org.nz/resources/pressure-injury-resources>

PPPIA Resources — Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance:

<https://pppia.org/pppia-resources>

References

1. International Wound Infection Institute (IWII) Wound infection in clinical practice. Wounds International 2022.
2. World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS), Florence Congress, Position Document. Advances in wound care: the Triangle of Wound Assessment Wounds International, 2016.
3. European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance. Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers/Injuries: Clinical Practice Guideline. The International Guideline. Emily Haesler (Ed). EPUAP/NPIAP/PPPIA: 2019.
4. Accident Compensation Commission, Ministry of Health and Health Quality and Safety Commission. 'Guiding Principles for Pressure Injury Prevention and Management in New Zealand', May 2017.

