

# Your Skin

**REACT TO  
RED SKIN**

**STOP  
PRESSURE  
ULCERS**

**Tissue Viability Team**  
Patient Information

# Pressure Ulcers

A pressure ulcer (also known as a pressure sore or bedsore) is damage on the skin and underlying tissue that can lead to an open wound. They are caused by pressure and friction on bony areas such as your bottom, heel, hip, elbow, ankle, shoulder and back of your head. Pressure ulcers can also occur due to medical devices such as oxygen masks, catheters so it is important that these devices fit properly and you are not positioned over them.

## SURFACE

Specialist equipment will be provided as appropriate including mattress and cushion to reduce the risk of a pressure ulcer developing.



## KEEP MOVING

Changing your position regularly helps prevent a build up of pressure. If you are in bed, try changing sides regularly, sit up slightly and use the flat of your foot and not your heel when pushing yourself up the bed.

When sitting in the chair if possible, try to take the weight off any vulnerable areas every 15 minutes by leaning forward and pushing up on the arms of the chair.

**Your skin must be checked regularly to spot the warning signs that a pressure ulcer is forming.**

**Signs to look for on the skin include:**

**change in skin colour,  
redder or darker**

**swelling over a bony area**

**heat or cold**

**blistering**

**discomfort or pain**

**broken skin**

## **I** NCONTINENCE

Damp skin caused, for example, by urine, faeces, sweat or a weeping wound can be damaged more easily by pressure.

- Keep the skin clean and dry.
- Regularly moisturise dry skin.
- A barrier cream may be applied if appropriate.

## **N** UTRITION

It is important you have a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids as accepted by your medical condition as a poor diet may cause you to be malnourished.

Lack of fluid intake may lead to dehydration. If you have experienced weight loss this may increase your risk of developing pressure damage.



## Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care. However, we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve service for future patients

If you have a concern or question regarding care of the service received, please discuss with / contact a member of the clinical team / matron in the first instance, who may be able to answer your questions without delay. If you feel you cannot discuss your concern with the clinical team, **The Patient Advice and Liaison service** can advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems on your behalf. This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital In Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

If you require this information in a different format please contact Freephone 0800 0282451

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