

Is there any equipment to help me?

- If you are at risk of developing a pressure injury there is specialised pressure redistribution equipment which can help.
 - cushions and mattress filled with foam, fibre, air or gel.
- If you are at risk of developing a pressure injury in hospital, we will give you equipment to use in hospital.
- You can also buy or rent equipment to use at home. You can ask your GP, community health professional, occupational therapist, pharmacist or wound care specialist where you can buy/rent this equipment.

How can carers help?

- Encourage the patient to move as often as they are able.
- Help the patient to change their position every 20 to 30 minutes.
- Check the patient's skin every day for red areas or broken skin.
- Provide healthy and varied food to the patient.

What to do if I get a pressure injury?

- Talk to a health professional, e.g. nurse, doctor, pharmacist, community health professional.
- Change your position every 20 to 30 minutes to reduce pressure on your kin.
- If you have special equipment to relieve pressure whilst sitting or lying, check it is working or if you are in hospital then ask your nurse to check this for you.

What happens if I go home from hospital with a pressure injury?

Before you leave the hospital we will:

- give you a plan to look after your skin at home.
- give advice to your health professional, e.g. GP or community based service and carer on the care you need.
- give you information on how to obtain specialised equipment such as cushions, mattress and other support to help relieve pressure.

Acknowledgement
South Eastern Sydney Illawarra 2007,
Bedsore, A patient and carer information brochure.



**ST VINCENT'S
PRIVATE HOSPITAL**
SYDNEY

CONDUCTED BY THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF AUSTRALIA

406 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst NSW 2010
Tel: (02) 8382 7111
www.svphs.org.au

Prevention of Pressure Injuries

Patient Information



*Inspired
by
You*



**ST VINCENT'S
PRIVATE HOSPITAL**
SYDNEY

CONDUCTED BY THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF AUSTRALIA

What are pressure injuries?

A pressure injury or bed sore is an injury to the skin caused by unrelieved pressure.

Damage may extend from the skin to the underlying muscles and bone.

How do pressure injuries occur?

Pressure injuries develop from lying or sitting in the same position for too long.

We should change our body position every 20 to 30 minutes.

Most pressure injuries occur when you are unable to reposition yourself due to:

- sudden illness
- injury
- certain medications
- long term medical condition

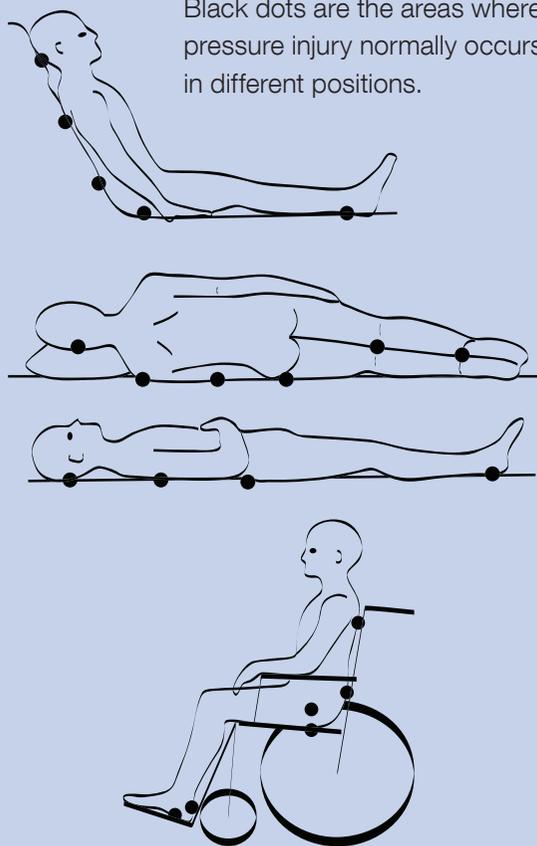
Are you at risk of a pressure injury?

Your risk of pressure injury is higher if you are:

- older than 50 years of age
- immobile or having an operation
- underweight, have recently lost weight or have been eating poorly
- overweight
- incontinent of urine and/or faeces

Potential pressure injuries points

Black dots are the areas where pressure injury normally occurs in different positions.



How can I tell if I am developing a pressure injury?

If you press a reddened area of your skin that has been under pressure and it:

- remains red after pressing that this is an early sign that a pressure injury is developing
- turns white (blanches) and then fades after pressing then it is likely that you are developing a pressure injury

Prevention of pressure injuries

Positioning

- Reposition your body every 20 minutes by simply standing or turning in bed
- Ask for assistance with movement as required
- Make sure your skin is checked daily

Nutrition

- Consider nutritional supplements if you are underweight, have recently lost weight or have been eating poorly
- Drink fluids regularly unless you are on a fluid restriction

Skin Care

To prevent your skin from breaking down:

- keep your skin clean and dry
- use a specialised skin friendly cleanser with a pH of 5.5

Keep the urine and faecal irritants off your skin by:

- applying barrier preparations (zinc base)
- asking advice from your GP