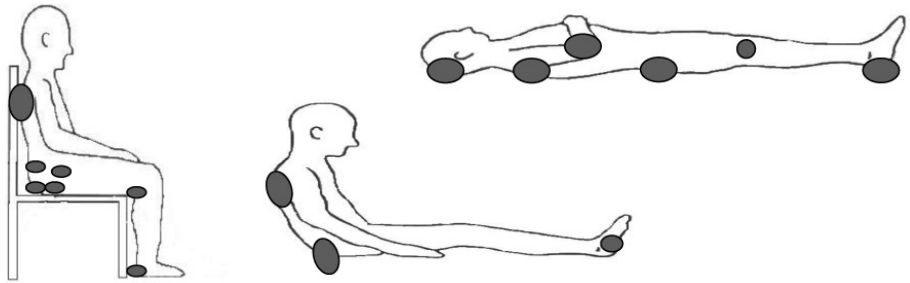
Information on pressure ulcers

Which areas of the body are most likely to develop pressure ulcers?

Areas particularly sensitive to pressure damage are shown in the diagrams below:



Other vulnerable areas can include: ears and nose, toes and ankles, skin under supportive devices such as splints, leg braces, plaster casts, neck support.

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Information on pressure ulcers

This leaflet is for patients, relatives and carers

Pressure area care together

Together we can have a positive impact on pressure ulcers

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What are pressure ulcers?

Pressure ulcers are a type of injury that breaks down the skin and underlying tissue. They are caused when an area of skin is placed under pressure e.g. when sitting or lying

Pressure ulcers can range in severity from patches of discoloured skin to open wounds that expose the underlying bone or muscle. Pressure ulcers can also be known as bedsores or pressure sores.
In most cases, pressure ulcers require minor nursing care. However, if left untreated, they can be serious and lead to life-threatening complications, such as blood poisoning or gangrene.

Why might I be at risk of developing a pressure ulcer?

You may be at risk of developing pressure ulcers for the following reasons:

- If your movement is limited or you are bed or chair bound.
- If you have poor circulation for example, heavy smoking or vascular disease can affect your blood supply
- If you have frequently moist skin. It is important to keep your skin clean and dry
- Conditions such as diabetes and stroke may reduce your sensitivity to pain or discomfort leading to a greater risk
- If you have poor diet and fluid intake. Losing too much weight can reduce the padding over bony areas
- If you have had a pressure ulcer in the past, this can increase the chance of developing a pressure ulcer again

Your **SSKIN** matter…

S - skin inspection

The nursing staff looking after you will ask to examine you and ask questions. This is called a ‘risk assessment’. Any existing dressings and/or bandages may need to be removed and then reapplied. If this assessment indicates you are at risk then a plan of care will be developed to help prevent pressure damage.

S - surface

As part of this care plan you may be offered pressure relieving equipment such as special cushions, mattresses, or boots.
It is important to use any equipment provided and follow any instructions given. This will reduce your risk level.

K - keep moving

Change your position regularly. The nursing staff will help you to do this.

I - incontinence

Keep your skin protected by maintaining good hygiene and by keeping your skin clean and dry. Avoid using highly perfumed products or talcum powder. If you experience problems with continence let the nursing staff know.

N - nutrition

Eat and drink well - you may be offered nutritional drinks to help with this. Nursing staff will ask to weigh you regularly throughout your stay.

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