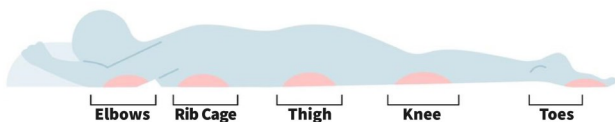
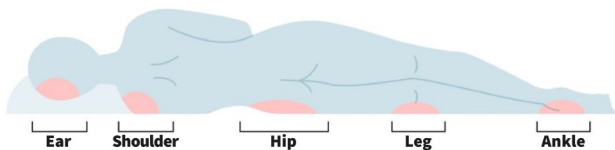
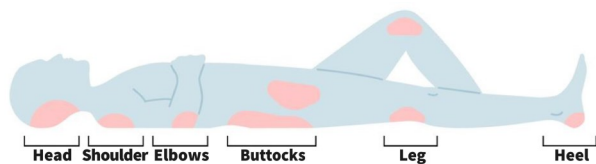
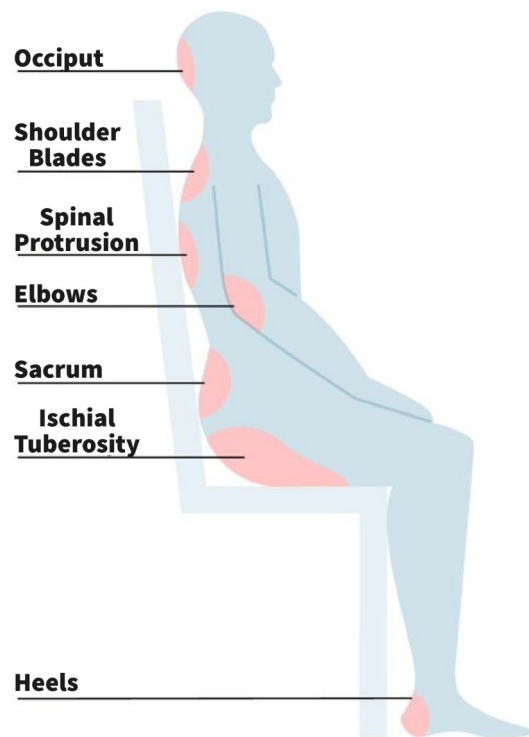


Common areas for pressure injuries



Additional information:

- Pressure injuries are also known as pressure ulcers.
- Pressure injuries commonly occur in bony areas, such as heels, elbows, and tailbones.
- They can:
 - ⇒ Develop in a short time and take a long time to heal
 - ⇒ Have negative impact on a person's health and overall well-being
 - ⇒ Be prevented

Pressure injuries

Tips for Patients and Families



What is a pressure injury?

A wound caused by prolonged pressure that damages the skin and the tissue underneath.

Causes can include:

- ⇒ Not being able to move independently
- ⇒ Not being able to control one's bowel/bladder
- ⇒ Not having a well-balanced diet
- ⇒ Poor skin health
- ⇒ Lack of ability to feel
- ⇒ Lack of ability to move
- ⇒ Lack of ability to communicate

What should I know?

- **Early signs:** Look for reddened skin in those with lighter complexions or a purple/blue discoloration for those with darker skin tones. Pressure injuries may or may not be painful.
- **Rapid Development:** Pressure injuries can progress quickly, especially for individuals who are critically ill.
- **Risk Factors:** Prolonged periods of sitting or lying down can increase the risk of developing pressure injuries on bony areas. Medical devices, like oxygen tubing, and feeding/breathing tubes, can also cause pressure injuries.

Keep the pressure off

- Change positions often, both lying and sitting.
- Place pillows between knees and/or ankles to prevent rubbing.
- Use pillows under the calves to keep heels from touching the mattress. Note: Be cautious as this could lead to knee contractures. Alternatively, consider using a heel protector boot.
- To prevent shearing, prevent sliding down in a chair or bed. Try to keep the head of the bed elevated at no more than 30 degrees where possible.
- Create and use a turning schedule.

What can I do if I have a pressure injury?

- A pressure injury can develop within minutes to several hours, depending on the source of the pressure, the location of the pressure, as well as the individual's overall health.
- Reposition your body every two to four hours while in bed.
- Shift your weight every 15 minutes if possible while sitting in a chair.
- Work with a dietitian to determine what to eat and drink to help pressure injuries heal.
- Communicate with your health care team if you are experiencing discomfort or pain over your pressure injury.

Tips for caregivers:

1. Use lifting devices to help transfer a person to bed, chair or when changing positions.
2. Keep the skin and bony areas free from rubbing on surfaces.
3. An individual's nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or doctor can provide guidance on proper transfer techniques.
4. The use of pressure-reducing devices does not replace an appropriate schedule for regularly repositioning someone.

Next steps if an injury develops:

- Management of pressure injury requires a collaborative effort with you and your health care team. You can help by:
 - ⇒ Adopting a regular exercise routine
 - ⇒ Consuming balanced meals/drinks
 - ⇒ Reducing pressure on the injury
 - ⇒ Monitoring and keeping your health care team informed of any changes
 - ⇒ Keeping the wound clean