

HOW TO



What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury happens when the skin is under pressure or it is dragged. The skin becomes weak, sore, changes colour, and then breaks down. It can be seen or felt on your skin.

Here are some pressure injuries in common spots on the body:



How to Stop Pressure Injury



Where can you get a pressure injury?

- Anywhere on the body.
- Often where there is a bone under the skin.
- Where you sit or lie on something without moving.

Pressure injury can:

- start quickly,
- take months to get better,
- really hurt and make you sicker,
- stop you doing things at home or going to work,
- make you stay in hospital longer.

Who can get a pressure injury?

- Anyone, EVEN YOU! It does not matter if you are young or old.
- This can be made worse if you:
 - do not have feeling in parts of your body,
 - are sick or are getting sicker,
 - are getting older (because your skin gets weaker),
 - cannot move,
 - have leakage problems with wee or poo.



How to Stop Pressure Injury



Some people even die from pressure injury...

BUT, LUCKILY you can stop most from happening!

Here is what you **CAN DO** to stop pressure injury:

- MOVE, MOVE and KEEP MOVING. Change your position often.
- Make sure your clothing or bedding is not bunched up or crinkled.
- Keep your skin clean from wee, poo or sweat. Anything wet makes the skin weaker and then it breaks down.
- Pat your skin dry. Use a soap free body wash. It is better for your skin. If your skin is dry, use a cream that you can see through.
- Eat healthy food. Have plenty of fluids like water, unless your doctor or nurse has said to cut down. This makes the skin stronger.
- Use pillows to stop you slipping or sliding. Ask for special equipment to help.
- Hang your heels over the end of the pillows.
- Know what is normal for your skin.
- Use a mirror or get someone else to look for you.



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What you CAN DO to stop pressure injury (Continued)

Check Skin:

- Look at your skin from head to toe every day. Do this more often if:
 - it is sore,
 - you are sick or getting sicker. Getting sicker also makes the skin weak.
- Tell someone if it:
 - is a different colour or looks different to the skin around it,
 - has redness, blisters, dark bruised areas, breaks, splits or sores,
 - has tingling, pain, numbness, feels warmer or more spongy.
- If you notice any of these things:
 - do not massage or rub the area,
 - lift that bit right off the bed or chair for 30 minutes.

If these things do not go away after 30 minutes, then get help quickly!



DO NOT:

- sit or lie in the same spot without moving for too long,
- slouch, slide down or drag your skin along a bed or a chair,
- let your heels touch the bed.

If you need help

ASK the people who care for you, your family, or carer, doctor or nurse.

**We All Need to
Work Together to
Stop Pressure Injury**



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References

Australian Wound Management Association (2012). *Pan Pacific Clinical Practice Guideline for the Prevention and Management of Pressure Injury*. Cambridge Media Osborne Park, WA: 2012. http://www.awma.com.au/publications/2012_AWMA_Pan_Pacific_Guidelines.pdf

National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance (2014). *Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: Clinical Practice Guideline*. Emily Haesler (Ed.). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, Western Australia. <http://www.internationalguideline.com/guideline>

Disclaimer

All care has been taken to ensure this document is current and based on best practice guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact your health professional.

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Regional Wounds Victoria (RWV) encourages you to download and print these brochures free of charge, for anyone at risk of pressure injuries and/or the people caring for those people.

Who is Regional Wounds Victoria (RWV)?

Nine Clinical Nurse Consultants (CNCs) from different regions in Victoria. The RWV CNCs work collaboratively with staff in District Nursing Services (DNS) and high level care Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services (PSRACS) to improve wound management practices and ultimately the outcomes for individuals in rural communities.

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