

Skin Breakdown and Pressure Injuries Resource

Preventative activities:

- Encourage the person to shift their weight frequently or get up and move if possible.
- Keep skin dry and clean.
- Protect the skin.
- Use moisture barrier creams to protect the skin from urine and stool.
- Change bedding and clothing frequently if needed. Watch for buttons on the clothing and wrinkles in the bedding that irritate the skin.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Follow the person's individual health care instructions (such as a healthcare plan, MERPS, and WDSI) in using pressure reduction devices. Please do not attempt to use before you received training, because if used incorrectly it could potentially cause more harm.
- Check skin every day or more frequent if indicated, or suggested by nursing. Report all findings as per healthcare plan and MERPs. A General Events Report may be necessary.

Tips for Repositioning

- Consider the following recommendations related to repositioning in a bed or chair:
- Shift weight frequently. If the person you support has enough upper body strength, do wheelchair pushups — raising the body off the seat by pushing on the arms of the chair.
- Look into a specialty wheelchair. Some wheelchairs allow you to tilt them, which can relieve pressure.
- Select cushions or a mattress that relieves pressure. Use cushions or a special mattress to relieve pressure and help ensure that the body is well positioned. Do not use doughnut cushions, as they can focus pressure on surrounding tissue.
- Adjust the elevation of the bed. If the bed can be elevated at the head, raise it no more than 30 degrees. This helps prevent shearing.

Tips for skin care

- Consider the following suggestions for skin care:
- Keep skin clean and dry. Wash the skin with a gentle cleanser and pat dry. Do this cleansing routine regularly to limit the skin's exposure to moisture, urine and stool.
- Protect the skin. Use moisture barrier creams to protect the skin from urine and stool. Change bedding and clothing frequently if needed. Watch for buttons on the clothing and wrinkles in the bedding that irritate the skin.
- Inspect the skin daily. Look closely at the skin daily for warning signs of a pressure sore.

Video about **pressure injuries** (including examples): <https://youtu.be/h3W3MWbCKC8>

Video for **prevention strategies** resource: <https://youtu.be/ZoPO8oI5UKs>

