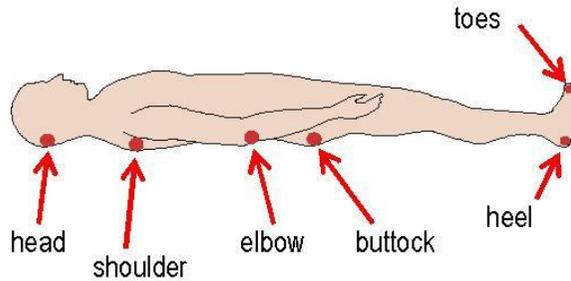


These are areas where pressure damage can occur:

Lying position



What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer is an area of skin and flesh which is damaged because the blood supply to the area is reduced. A pressure ulcer can develop within hours from constant pressure. The longer the pressure remains unrelieved the deeper the wound may become. The deeper the wound, the longer it will take to heal.

You could be at risk of developing a pressure ulcer if:

- You are unable to move around without help from someone else
- You spend a long time in bed/chair
- You are elderly
- You have a serious illness
- You are diabetic or have had a stroke
- You have damp skin (e.g. sweat, incontinence, wet wounds)
- You don't have a balanced diet
- You are underweight
- You smoke
- You are taking long term steroids
- You have previously had healed ulcers

Signs to look out for are:

- Red areas on light-skinned people
- Purple/bluish areas on dark-skinned people
- Swelling, blisters, shiny areas, dry patches, cracks, calluses
- Hard or warm areas
- Soreness or pain in areas at risk

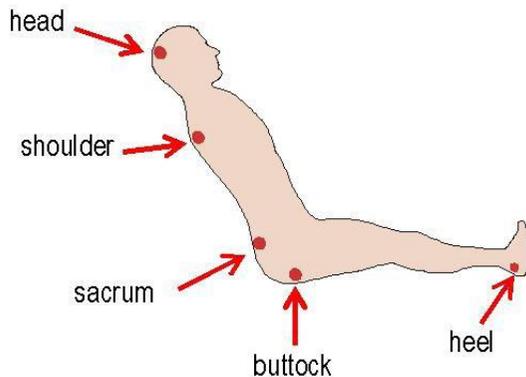
Sometimes damage can occur to the underlying tissues beneath the skin, presenting as purple / maroon discolouration or a blood-filled blister.

The area may feel painful, firm, boggy, warmer or cooler than adjacent skin. The surface of the skin remains intact but if it breaks down it can reveal a deep ulcer.

Are all pressure ulcers avoidable?

The majority of pressure ulcers are avoidable with the correct care and equipment, but there are occasions when despite this, pressure ulcers may develop.

Sitting position



How you can help prevent pressure ulcers from developing:

- Avoid repeated friction and shearing. This can happen when you slide down or are moved up in a bed or chair
- Try to change your position at least every 1-2 hours during the day
- Inspect your skin regularly or ask your carer to do it for you
- Make sure you have a healthy, balanced diet and good fluid intake
- Keep as active as you can
- Do not rub your skin dry but pat gently
- Try to reduce the number of layers between you and your pressure relieving mattress / cushion
- Try to avoid crumbs or creases in the bed sheets
- Make sure the person helping you has read this leaflet



If you are concerned you are at risk of developing a pressure ulcer you should get professional advice from a community health care professional. Please contact the person who gave you this leaflet or the Community Nursing Service on the telephone number on the front of this leaflet.

Feedback

We hope you are satisfied with the services you receive and welcome feedback. If you have any comments, suggestions or concerns please speak to a member of the community nursing team.

If you would prefer to communicate with someone outside the team, please contact Carole Shackleton, Customer Care Manager, on 020 83398092.

Leaflet References

European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel: Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: quick reference guide 2009

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE, 2005), The prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers CG29

yourhealthcare

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PREVENTION OF PRESSURE ULCERS

Your Healthcare is a social enterprise company, delivering quality community health and social care services to local residents in Kingston and Richmond as part of the NHS family. www.yourhealthcare.org

Adult Community Nursing Service

Daytime Contact
08.30am to 5.00pm

Evening Contact

