Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together



Pressure Ulcers

Information to help you keep your skin healthy







Pressure Ulcers



Causes



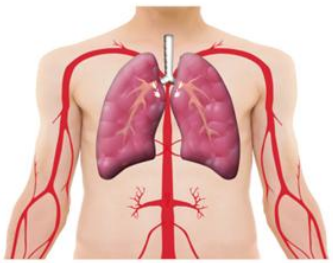
Top Tips

Pressure ulcers



A **pressure ulcer** is sore broken skin.

They happen when something presses into or rubs against your skin.



Too much pressure stops your skin getting enough blood and oxygen.

This can hurt your skin and make it unhealthy.



It is important to move around to help your skin stay healthy.



Pressure ulcers often start on bony parts of your body.

For example,

- Tailbones
- Hips
- Heels
- elbows.

These parts of your body can press into the skin from the inside.

Common Causes



- Tight shoes or glasses and hearing aids.



- Medical equipment.

For example, **splint tubes**, masks, and **drains**.

Splint tubes and **drains** are small tubes to keep a body part in place or drain fluid or air.



- Sitting or lying in one place for too long.

Ask for help



Tell someone if you feel sore spots on your skin or if your skin

- has blisters or bruises
- is red or swollen
- looks or feels different.

Doctors, nurses and carers can help you feel better and stop pressure ulcers getting worse.

Top Tips to Stop Pressure Ulcers



1. Check your skin every morning and night.

Look at bony parts of your body.
For example, tailbones, hips, and heels.

Ask someone to help you if you cannot check yourself.



2. Check the skin around any medical equipment you use.

For example an oxygen mask.

Make sure there are no marks or changes in the skin under the equipment.



3. Use any special cushions or mattresses you have been given.

They help protect your skin.

Tell your carer if they are not comfortable.



4. Do not sit or lie in one spot for too long.

You can

- go for a walk or stand up for 2 minutes
- roll over onto your side in bed
- lean forward or to one side in a chair or wheelchair for 30 seconds every 30 minutes.



5. Keep your skin clean and dry.

Wet skin can be hurt by pressure more easily.

Tell your doctor or nurse if your skin is sore because of bladder or bowel problems.

This is a problem many people have.
Please do not be embarrassed.



6. Eat healthily.

Eat fruit and vegetables.

Eat proteins like meat, fish, eggs, and cheese.

They help keep your skin strong.



7. Drink lots of water and other non-alcoholic drinks.

This will help keep your skin healthy and strong.

ARC Northern Ireland
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