

# Preventing pressure ulcers

## What are the early signs of a pressure ulcer?

- change in skin colour, redder or darker
- heat
- discomfort or pain
- blisters
- skin damage

## If you see warning signs

Contact your healthcare professional immediately on:

NELFT Single Point of Access  
**0300 300 1710**

## Think 'SSKIN'

### **S** Surface

Are your support surfaces, for example, your bed, cushions and chair, suitable to prevent pressure ulcers? Your nurse or carer can explain different types of equipment and answer any questions you may have.

### **S** Skin inspection

Check your skin for pressure damage at least once a day. Look for redness or skin that is darker than normal. Do any areas of your skin feel hot or painful? Also watch out for blisters, dry patches or cracks in the skin.

### **K** Keep moving

Moving and changing position reduces the risk of pressure ulcers. Change your position as often as you can, with help from your carers if needed, even if you have a special mattress or cushions.

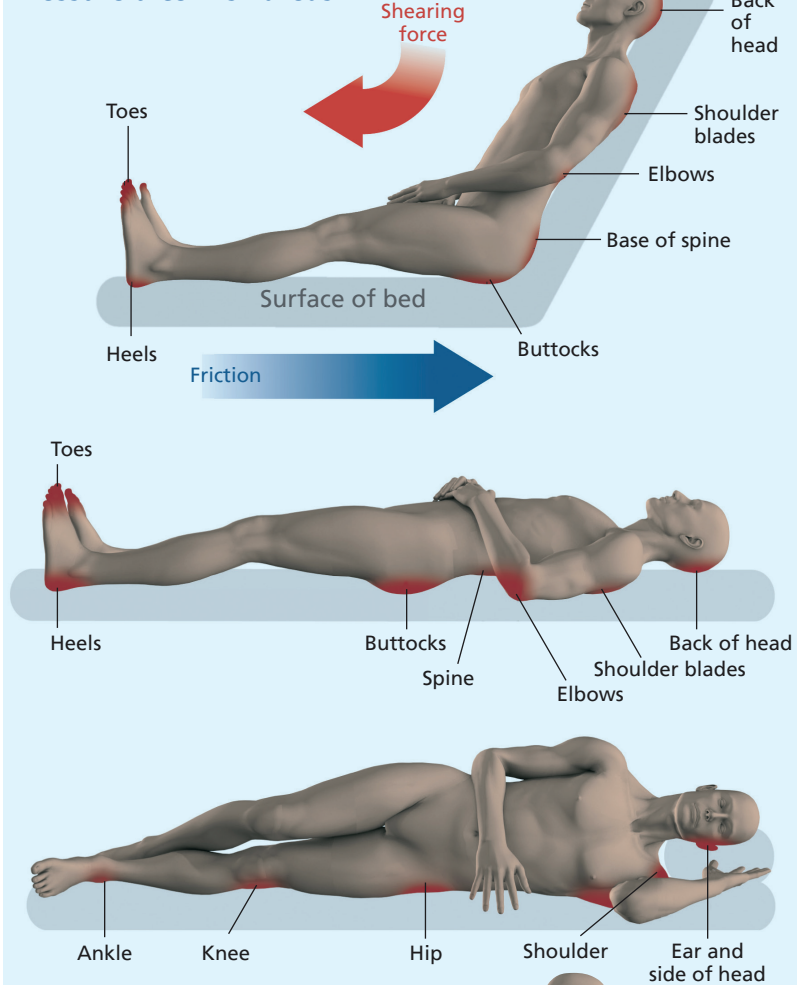
### **I** Incontinence and moisture

Wet or damp skin increases the risk of pressure ulcers developing. Keep your skin dry and clean. Use a barrier cream if it is recommended by your nurse or other healthcare professional.

### **N** Nutrition and hydration

Eating well and drinking plenty of fluids reduces the risk of developing pressure ulcers. If you are having difficulties eating or drinking, speak to your nurse or carers.

## Pressure ulcer risk areas



## What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer, often known as a pressure sore or bed sore, is an area of damage to the skin and underlying tissue. They are caused by a combination of pressure, shearing and friction.

### Pressure

Normal body weight can squash the skin and damage the blood supply to an area, leading to tissue damage.

### Shearing

Sliding or slumping down in a bed or chair can damage the skin and deeper layers of tissue.

### Friction

Poor lifting and moving techniques can remove the top layers of skin. Repeated friction can increase the risk of pressure ulcers.

