



REACT TO RED SKIN

STOP
PRESSURE
ULCERS

pressure ulcers.
prevention is better than cure.

Anybody who sits or lies down for long periods of time is increasing their risk of getting pressure ulcers. Your Turn is designed to help people understand the causes of pressure ulcers and, therefore, prevent them in the first place.

There is a website to help answer some of the questions you might have about pressure ulcers, whether you or somebody you know might be at risk. Visit www.your-turn.org.uk

For specific questions about your personal circumstances please seek advice from your healthcare professional.



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did you know that:

- Pressure ulcers are often known as bedsores or pressure sores.
- Pressure ulcers are areas of damaged skin and tissue that develop when constant-pressure on a part of the body shuts down the blood vessels feeding that area of skin.
- Pressure ulcers usually occur when someone sits or lies in one position for too long.
- Pressure ulcers usually develop below the waist but can occur anywhere on the body such as the shoulders and the back of the head.

Q Can pressure ulcers be prevented?

A In most cases yes. The most important factor in preventing pressure ulcers is avoiding prolonged pressure on one area of the skin. Encourage people to change their position regularly throughout the day. For those who cannot do this for themselves they should be moved regularly – every 2 hours for those lying and every hour for those sitting.

Special mattresses and cushions can help to reduce pressure on sensitive areas.

Regular checking of the skin is important to spot the early warning signs and call a medical professional for advice if you notice an area of skin has changed. This is particularly important if a person spends a lot of time in a wheelchair, in bed or in one position in a chair.

Keep the skin healthy, clean and dry. Use a mild soap and warm water to wash with.

Make sure that you eat and drink well – skin reacts to nutritional changes in the body. A well balanced diet should include fresh fruit and vegetables and plenty of fluids.

Q What are the symptoms of a pressure ulcer?

A A pressure ulcer may initially appear as an area of red skin that does not disappear when you press it. It may also feel tender or warm to the touch. For people with darker pigmented skin look for signs of skin change such as heat, swelling and pain. The area may become painful and purple in colour. Continued pressure on this area can cause the skin to break down.

Q Who is affected?

A Pressure ulcers can affect anyone but the people who are most at risk are those with poor mobility who spend long periods in bed or in a chair, unable to change their own position. Poor nutrition, dehydration, incontinence and poor circulation can also add to the risk of developing a pressure ulcer.

Q How do you treat pressure ulcers?

A Treatment is much more difficult than prevention. Treatment will include relieving pressure and keeping the area clean. It is likely to involve regular nurse visits and lengthy treatments.

For further information on the prevention of pressure sores visit www.your-turn.org.uk/reactoredskin