

# Preventing Pressure Injuries

Information for  
patients and carers



**ACT**  
Government

**Canberra Health  
Services**

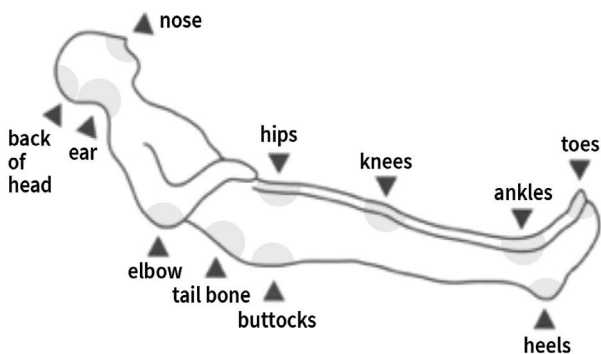
# What is a pressure injury?

**A pressure injury is an area of skin that is red, broken or blistered that can develop on a bony part of the body because of pressure, friction and/or moisture.**

Pressure injuries may develop on bony parts of the body such as heels, hips, the bottom and/or elbows.

They may also develop under medical devices such as splints, braces, catheters and drains.

Pressure injuries can be small grazes or deeper wounds that may need to be covered with a bandage or dressing.



## Am I at risk of pressure injuries?

You may be at risk of pressure injuries if you have one or more of the following.

You:

- are unwell
- are confined to a bed or chair
- are elderly or very young
- are unable to walk
- are having an operation or long procedure
- have loss of feeling or poor circulation, especially in your feet and heels
- have problems with your nutrition
- have moist skin from sweating a lot or from problems with your bladder or bowel.

## How do I reduce my risk of pressure injuries?



### Stay active

- Pressure injuries can happen quickly if you lie or sit in the same position for too long.
- If you are confined to bed or chair and unable to move, staff or your carer can help you change your position.
- You can help by turning from side to side in your bed or going for short walks.
- Avoid sliding or dragging yourself across any surface such as the bed as this can cause rubbing and skin damage.
- Exercise as much as you comfortably can.



### Skin care

- Check your skin daily.
- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- You may need to clean your skin often if you sweat a lot or have problems with your bladder or bowel.
- Use a skin friendly cleanser and a moisturiser.
- Tell us about any discomfort.



### Nutrition

- Eat a balanced diet that includes fruit, vegetables, meat, chicken, fish, rice and grains.
- You may need to take a vitamin and/or start having nutritional drinks.
- Have plenty to drink unless we tell you not to.
- Stop smoking (if you would like help to quit smoking you can phone the Quitline on 13 78 48).



## Preventing Pressure Injuries

### In your home

- You may need follow up care from a community nurse or health professional.
- You may need a special mattress, bed and cushion.



Do you want to know more?

Ask your nurse or health professional.

### Contact

**5124 0000** – Canberra Hospital

**(02) 6201 6111** – North Canberra Hospital

### Acknowledgement of Country




Canberra Health Services acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and contribution to the life of this region.



### Accessibility (how to get this information in other ways)

**To get this information:**

-  • in large print
-  • to listen to
- in any other format
-  call (02) 5124 0000



 **Call 131 450**

[canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/accessibility](https://canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/accessibility)



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