



Central and
North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

How to prevent pressure ulcers

A guide for patients and carers



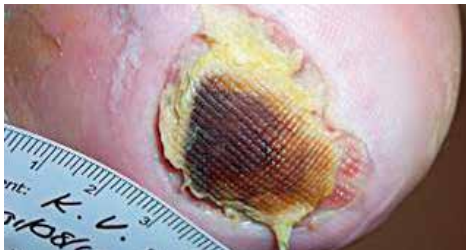
Wellbeing for life

What are pressure ulcers?

Pressure ulcers (bed sores) are caused by a constant pressure that damages the skin and underlying tissues. They can range from reddened skin to an open wound. Even slight rubbing or friction on the skin may cause pressure ulcers.

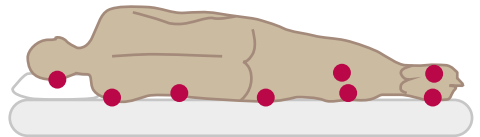
What do pressure ulcers look like?

A pressure ulcer can look like redness of the skin that does not go away to an open sore that goes through to bone.



Where on the body can you get a pressure ulcer?

You can get a pressure ulcer anywhere on the body, however, pressure ulcers are most common over bony areas regardless of body size/shape.



What are the risk factors?

Many pressure ulcers can be prevented. The following problems may increase the risk of pressure ulcers:

- If you have to stay in bed, a chair or a wheel chair, or you cannot change position without help you are at particular risk of developing pressure ulcers
- Skin irritation may occur if you cannot keep your skin free of urine, faeces
- If you are not eating and drinking well, your skin can be damaged more easily and pressure ulcers will take longer to heal
- Being in pain may lead to reluctance to change your position regularly.

How can I prevent pressure ulcers?

Six actions to reduce risk:

Skin

Inspect your skin at least once a day, especially over bony areas. Keep skin dry and clean.

Surface

Getting the right seating equipment and using it correctly

Keep moving

Change position at regular intervals

Incontinence

Advice can be sought on the use of appropriate creams, pads, pants and other equipment from your GP/Practice Nurse

Nutrition

A well-balanced diet and fluid intake is essential. See [nhs.uk/live-well/good-food/pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/good-food/pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx)

Sickness

It is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle as becoming generally unwell increases the chance of developing a pressure ulcer.

Useful resources

Tissue Viability Society

[Tvs.org.uk](https://www.tvs.org.uk)

NHS Choices

[Nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx)

NICE guidelines for the public

[Nice.org.uk/guidance/cg179](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg179)

Love Great Skin

[Lovegreatskin.co.uk](https://www.lovegreatskin.co.uk)

If you have any questions please talk to your district nurse, doctor or therapist.

Tell us, we're listening!

Our staff want to know how they are doing. Tell us what you think at www.cnwl.nhs.uk/feedback then we'll know what we have to do.

This document is also available in other languages, large print, Braille, and audio format upon request. Please email communications.cnwl@nhs.net

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضاً بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبصيغة سمعية عند الطلب

Arabic

این مدرک همچنین بنا به درخواست به زبانهای دیگر، در چاپ درشت و در فرمت صوتی موجود است.

Farsi

এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় প্রিন্ট আকারে, ব্রেল এবং অডিও টেপ আকারেও অনুরোধ পাওয়া যায়

Bengali

Dokumentigaan waxaa xitaa lagu heli karaa luqado kale, daabacad far waa-wayn, farta indhoolaha (Braille) iyo hab dhegaysi ah markii la soo codsado.

Somali

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Portuguese

நீங்கள் கேட்டுக்கொண்டால், இந்த ஆவணம் வேறு மொழிகளிலும், பெரிய எழுத்து அச்சிலும் அல்லது ஒலிநாடா வடிவிலும் அளிக்கப்படும்.

Tamil

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Spanish

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w formie audio.

Polish

આ દસ્તાવેજ વિનંતી કરવાથી બીજી ભાષાઓ, મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરો અથવા ઓડિઓ રચનામાં પણ મળી રહેશે.

Gujurati

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Turkish