



Your Residents are Counting on You! What You Can Do to Prevent Pressure Ulcers

General

- Be proud of what you have learned! Share it with other CNAs as you work together to care for residents. New CNAs will benefit when you share how to prevent pressure ulcers. Preventing pressure ulcers will make your work easier and will make your nursing home a better place to live for your residents!
- Review this information from time to time, so that you don't forget it.
- Thoroughly inspect the skin and report any problems **immediately**. Look at the skin every time you bathe or change a resident and report any concerns to the nurse.
- Clean skin is important. Remember that their skin is fragile. Wash soiled skin using a gentle soap and avoid harsh rubbing. Use lotion to keep skin from being too dry.
- Speak up! Don't be afraid to ask if you don't know or you think your resident needs something. Your residents are counting on you!

Moisture

Moisture increases the risk for pressure ulcers. Common sources of moisture are urine, stool, and sweat.

- ✓ Use moisture barrier in areas that tend to be wet, such as the peri-area and buttocks. Ask the nurses to tell you which residents need barrier ointments. Speak up if you think a particular resident needs a barrier ointment.
- ✓ Change clothes, bedding, and incontinence briefs as often as needed to keep the resident dry. Use pads or incontinence briefs that pull the moisture away from the skin.
- ✓ Take residents to the bathroom often, to help keep them dry. If the resident can't get up, offer the bedpan or urinal frequently.

Nutrition

USUAL food intake.

- ✓ Help resident to eat and allow them enough time.
 - ✓ Provide foods they like (within their diet).
 - ✓ Offer fluids frequently (as diet allows).
 - ✓ Provide supplements as ordered. Serve them chilled if the resident prefers them cold. Encourage the resident to drink them and report to the nurse if they don't.
 - ✓ Encourage between meal snacks for residents that need them. Ask the nurse and dietician to tell you which residents need more calories and protein and which foods will meet these needs.
 - ✓ Tell the nurse if a resident isn't eating well or is losing weight.
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Watch for Residents Who Don't Feel Pressure on Their Skin

Some residents can't feel pressure or pain normally, so they can be injured without knowing it. They need for you to help keep them safe.

- ✓ Check for anything that could be creating pressure on the skin. This might include:
 - Improperly fitting or tight incontinence briefs
 - Medical devices, such as urinary catheters or oxygen tubing
 - Sheets or clothing that are bunched up or wrinkled against their skin
 - Shoes that are too tight or in need of repair
- ✓ Be especially careful when transferring these residents or helping them to walk or move around. They may injure more easily and take longer to heal.

Mobility

Changing and controlling body position.

- ✓ Float the heels, or use heel devices, when needed.
- ✓ Reposition at least every 2 hours for bed-bound residents; hourly for chair bound. Some residents may need to be moved more often.
- ✓ Teach the resident to reposition themselves, if possible. You may need to remind them or help them to do it.
- ✓ Use pillows for support and check for objects that may have gotten into all support surfaces.

Activity

Keep your residents moving.

- ✓ Assist residents with range of motion or walking if needed.
- ✓ Encourage residents to do as much as possible on their own, even if they do things very slowly. Be patient!

Friction & Shear

Ability to move without rubbing or dragging.

- ✓ Use a lift sheet to avoid dragging the resident when repositioning.
- ✓ Non-skid socks on feet will help protect the skin, and help prevent slips and falls in residents who are able to move about.
- ✓ Long sleeves and pants, elbow protectors, and heel protectors may be needed.
- ✓ Keep the head of the bed at the lowest degree of elevation possible unless there is a medical condition that requires it to be up.
- ✓ A trapeze may help some residents to avoid friction and shear.