

What are the risk factors?

Certain factors can increase the risk of developing pressure injuries. For example:

- Being 65 or older
- Being obese
- Smoking or vaping nicotine products
- Having delicate skin
- Urine or stool leakage without being able to control it
- Problems with your senses, such as vision, hearing, touch, etc.
- Wounds caused by prolonged pressure on the skin, currently or in the past
- Pain when moving or in the area where there is constant pressure
- Taking medications such as strong painkillers, relaxants, anti-inflammatories or immunosuppressants
- Having had surgery and experiencing in a long recovery period
- Difficulty moving or being unable to move
- Blood circulation problems that reduce blood flow to tissues, such as vascular disease or diabetes
- Poor or unbalanced diet or hydration
- Disorders of consciousness, like confusion or being unconscious
- Social problems, such as limited access to care or lack of support

What should I do to prevent aggravating the pressure injury?

- **Do not ignore redness.**
- Do not use a donut pillow to sit on.
- Do not use sheepskin to reduce pressure
- Do not rub or massage red skin.
- Do not burst blisters.
- Do not wear shoes or clothing that is too tight.

What do I do if I notice something abnormal on my skin?

- If you are hospitalized or in a residential rehabilitation centre, inform your nurse or support worker.
- If you are at home, contact your health professional or a health worker, or call Info-Santé at 8 1-1.
- Follow the treatment plan.



For any questions or concerns, contact your health professional or Info-Santé at 8 1-1 (option 1).

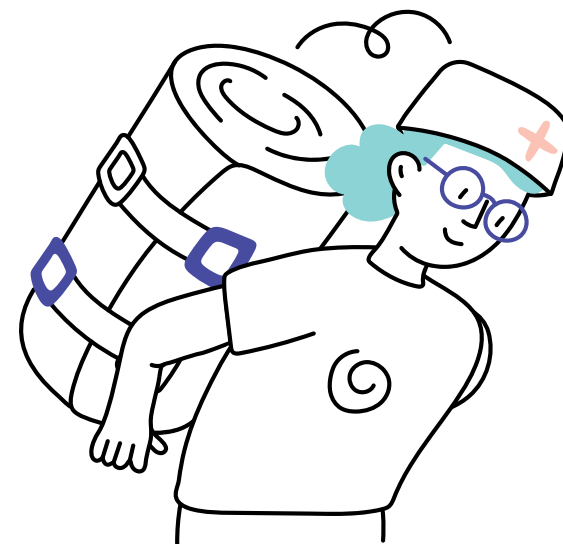
Source: Based on the pamphlet "La prévention des lésions de pression" (in French) by the CISSS des Laurentides, December 2016

**Centre intégré
de santé et de services
sociaux de l'Abitibi-
Témiscamingue**

Québec



Wound prevention



Information pamphlet for patients and their loved ones of the Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue

What is a wound?

A wound is an injury that causes damage to the skin. It can increase the risk of infection or require special care to prevent complications. These injuries can take the form of redness, blisters, abrasions, dead tissue (black) or even a pressure wounds.

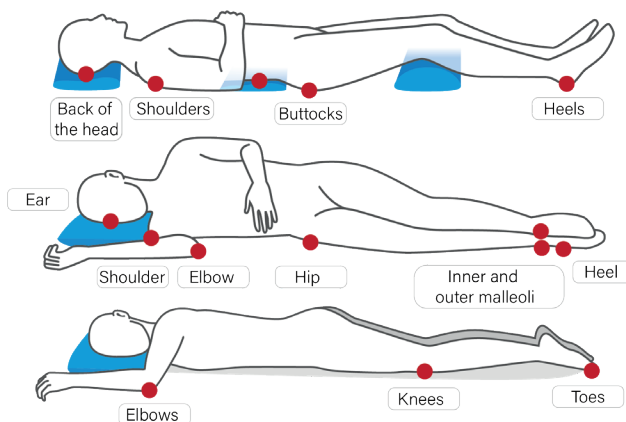
How does a pressure injury develop?

A pressure injury occurs when continuous and prolonged pressure compresses the skin. This pressure prevents blood flow to the skin and tissue, resulting in dead tissue and the onset of an injury. This pressure is usually situated between the bone and an external surface.

Did you know?

A pressure injury can form in a few hours, but take months to heal. Recurrences are frequent.

What are the main parts of the body where a pressure injury can develop?



What preventive actions can I take?

1 Examine and inspect your skin every day

- Look for redness, abrasions, change in skin colour (skin that is reddish, blueish, blackish), heat, swelling or blisters.
- Especially, monitor the bones in the buttocks, tailbone, heels, ears, shoulder blades, elbows and hips.

2 Find a good position that reduces pressure

- In bed, change positions at least once every **two to four hours**.
- **DO NOT** raise the head of the bed more than 30 degrees; favour a horizontal position.
- In a chair, change position every **15 to 30 minutes, to release pressure for 30 seconds** (e.g.: shift your weight from right to left). If this is impossible for you, **ask for help with position changes at least once every hour**.
- In a chair, favour a reclined position to reduce pressure on the buttocks and avoid sliding down.
- **Release pressure on your heels** by placing a pillow under your calves.
- Place a pillow between your knee bones touching when lying on your side.

3 For transfers

- Participate in the transfer process.
- Follow the recommendations of professionals.

4 Reduce moisture on your skin

- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- Use dry clothes, undergarments or sheets. Change them regularly in case of leakage or if they are wet.
- Institute a schedule for bladder and bowel elimination based on your needs.

5 Habits

- Have 3 full meals a day based on Canada's Food Guide.
- Control your weight.
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day, unless otherwise indicated by a professional.
- Keep your skin hydrated with an unscented hydrating cream every day.
- Wash your skin with mild soap, with a neutral pH, and pat it dry.
- Use a skin barrier cream in case of incontinence.
- Stay active, move to improve blood circulation.
- Stretch every 30 minutes.
- If you are diabetic, maintain your blood sugar level according to recommendations.
- Try to stop or reduce your use of nicotine products, which reduce oxygen supply to the skin.

Why should I keep an eye on my skin?

To avoid the potential impact and consequences of pressure injuries:

- Risk of infection
- Pain
- Amputation
- Reduced quality of life
- Reduced social activities
- Leave from work
- Or even death