What are pressure injuries?
Pressure injuries are localised injury to the skin or underlying tissue caused by unrelieved pressure or friction.
Common in areas where bones are close to the skin such as buttocks, elbows and heels, but they can develop anywhere on the body.

Who is at risk?
- Anyone who is unable to change position
- Anyone with inadequate nutrition and/or not drinking enough fluids
- Patients with loss of bowel or bladder control
- Patients with altered mental awareness
- Those with an inability to feel or report pain
- Patients who are feverish, have diabetes or low blood pressure
- Patients with reduced blood flow to the legs

Get involved in your care
Talk to your healthcare team and ask questions.
Discuss your plan with your nurse and medical team.
Find out more by reading the fact sheet ‘Get involved in getting better.’ Ask for a copy or scan with your mobile phone camera.

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If you would like to provide feedback or request a copy of this information in a different format, contact us at patient.inform@alfred.org.au

Together we can take the pressure off
What do I look for?
- A red area on the skin which is still present when no pressure is on it
- Swelling of the skin
- Localised heat
- Pain
- Change in firmness or elasticity of the skin.
- Skin breakdown that may appear like a graze, blister or ulcer

Our goals
- To assess and identify areas at risk of pressure injury to help prevent damage
- To utilise skin protection strategies to maintain and improve your skin condition
- Protect against pressure related injury
- Promote nutrition and hydration
- Encourage activity and mobility
- Educate all patients and care providers

What can we do together to prevent a pressure injury?
1. Limit pressure
- Change position at least 2 hourly if confined to bed
- While in a chair, change positions frequently every 15 minutes
- Avoid direct pressure on areas that are painful or becoming red

2. Reduce friction
- Try not to drag yourself to move position
- Avoid repetitive movements such as rubbing feet on the sheet to scratch an itch

3. Take care of your skin
- Moisturise to prevent flaking of skin
- Keep your skin clean from urine and faeces
- Check your skin frequently during bathing and turning
- Avoid moisture build up on skin from perspiration
- Keep linen dry and free of wrinkles

4. Engage the staff
- Allow a member of your health care team to inspect your skin
- If you have areas on your skin that are showing changes or you are concerned about please let your nurse know immediately
- Talk to your nurse about pressure relieving devices
- Talk to your nurse if you have any painful pressure areas on your skin

5. Equipment
- Heel wedge with cradle
- Protective bootie
- Ear pressure relieving device
- Pressure relieving mattress / cushion

What does turning do?
- Prevents pressure injuries
- Allows delivery of nutrients and oxygen to cells
- Provides exercise for muscles
- Stimulates circulation