



Improving lives

A guide to the prevention of pressure ulcers

Working with PUPS (Pressure Ulcer Prevention Strategy)

Information for patients and carers

oxleas.nhs.uk



This leaflet aims to provide you and your carer with information on pressure ulcers, how they develop and what steps you can take to help prevent them.

What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer (also called pressure sore or bed sore) is damage that has occurred to the skin and underlying tissue as a result of pressure. This is caused by sitting or lying in one position for too long without moving. This reduces the blood flow to that area and causes the skin to break down. It usually starts with the skin changing colour and can then develop into an open sore.

Who may develop pressure ulcers?

You are more at risk if you:

- have limited mobility
- are sitting for long periods
- have to stay in bed
- have loss of sensation e.g. diabetes or stroke
- have poor circulation e.g. vascular disease
- have a poor diet or not drinking enough
- have moist skin e.g. caused by incontinence
- are taking certain medication e.g. steroids.

A pressure ulcer can develop in only a few hours

Skin inspection

Inspecting your skin for signs of damage is the most important thing you can do to stop yourself from developing pressure ulcers.

Look carefully at your skin during your daily routine, using a mirror to see awkward places if you need to.

Get to know its usual colour, texture and temperature.

Early stage



Late stage



Signs that damage is occurring:

- purple/bluish marks on dark skin — may not always be seen
- red marks on lighter skin
- swelling
- blisters or damage to skin
- areas of skin that feel warmer/cooler or harder.

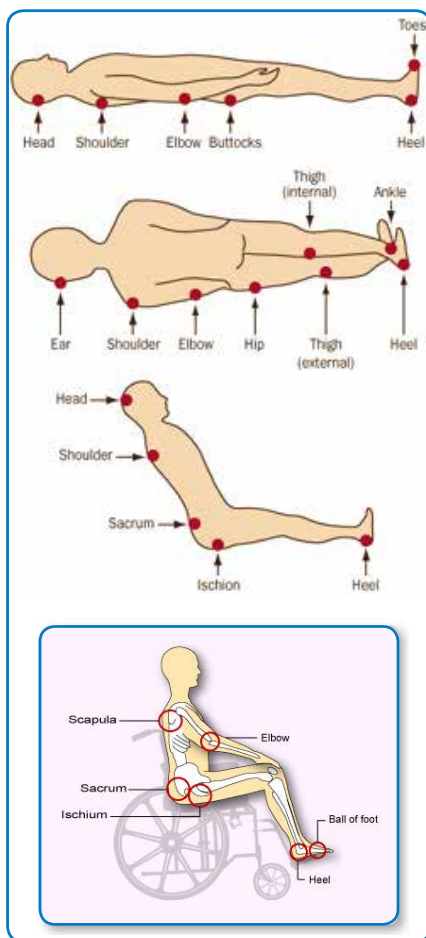
Please talk to your health carer if you think you may be developing a pressure ulcer.

Five ways to prevent pressure ulcers

1. Move around and change position as much as possible, for example:
 - if sitting attempt to stand every 30 minutes to one hour
 - reduce sitting times by alternating between chair and bed.
2. Keep your skin clean and dry.
3. Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids.

4. Use pressure relieving aids. Your carer will work with you to decide which one will work best for you.
5. Cooperate with any moving and turning programme planned by healthcare staff.

Common places for pressure ulcers to develop



Further information

If you require further information about pressure ulcers/bed sores please visit NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Contact us

This leaflet provides some advice to prevent pressure ulcers but not all the advice applies to each person at risk. If you have concerns about pressure areas, it is essential to get professional advice. Please contact your GP, or The Complex Wound Care Team/District Nurse via our Central Access Team on 020 8320 3550 Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.

If you are not happy with our service, please speak in the first instance to the person who you saw at your appointment.



@oxleasNHS



facebook.com/oxleasNHS

oxleas.nhs.uk

Confidentiality

All staff abide by a strict code of conduct on confidentiality and only share information in order to provide good quality care. We usually discuss this with you first.

Your opinion matters

We welcome your views on the services we provide. PALS is a free, confidential service which helps patients, families and carers deal with any concerns about our treatment and care.

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
(answerphone available)

Email: oxl-tr.pals@nhs.net

Tel: 0800 9177159 (freephone)
(not free from mobile phones)

Raising concerns

Your complaints, comments and suggestions help us improve the services we provide.

Email: oxl-tr.complaints@nhs.net
Tel: 01322 625751

Accessible information

If you'd like information in your own language, large print, audio or other formats, we can arrange this. Please speak to a member of staff.

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust

Pinewood House

Pinewood Place

Dartford

Kent DA2 7WG

Tel: 01322 625700



Oxleas

NHS Foundation Trust