What can I do to help?

- Inspect and maintain skin (you may need a mirror for awkward places)
- Report redness to a Health Care professional
- Relieve pressure by moving, standing or turning
- Do not sit for longer than 2 hours without relieving pressure
- Eat a well balanced diet and maintain normal body weight
- Use any equipment that has been provided and return when no longer needed
- Reduce or stop smoking.

Further information needed?

Further information can be obtained from Health Care professionals on:

- Risk factors associated with developing pressure ulcers
- Areas of the skin that are of greatest risk of pressure damage
- How to care for your skin, inspect and recognise skin changes
- How to adjust your lying or seating position
- How often you need to be moved
- Which equipment you should use and how
- How to avoid pressure (e.g. by making sure bedding is free of creases, clothing does not have thick seams, zips, studs or buttons, and shoes and socks are not too tight)
- Where to seek further advice.

There is a dedicated website to pressure ulcer prevention which has been supported by Health Care professionals. [www.your-turn.org.uk](http://www.your-turn.org.uk)

Do you have a concern, complaint or comment?

We always value feedback from you about the care you receive and you may be contacted to comment on the service. However, if you wish to make a compliment, comment or complaint please contact:

Tel: 01905 681517
Email: Whcnhs.pals@nhs.net

Do you have a communication or information support need?
If so please contact the person who gave you this leaflet so that those needs can be recorded and responded to.
What are Pressure Ulcers?

A pressure ulcer is an area of localised damage to the skin and underlying tissue damage caused by pressure, shear, friction and or a combination of these.

• Pressure is when the weight of the body is pressing down on the skin
• Shear is when layers of the skin are forced to slide over one another for example when you slide down or are pulled up a bed or chair
• Friction is the rubbing of the skin.

When the blood supply and Oxygen to the skin is damaged this leads to death of the skin cells.

Are they the same as bed sores?

Pressure ulcers are sometimes known as bed sores, pressure sores and decubitus ulcers.

Which age group develop Pressure Ulcers?

Anybody can develop a pressure ulcer whatever age they are, but they are more common in those who are very young or very old.

Are Pressure Ulcers serious?

Pressure ulcers can be serious, depending upon how much skin and tissue has been damaged. Severe pressure ulcers can destroy the muscle or bone underneath the skin so they take a very long time to heal. In extreme cases pressure ulcers can become life threatening as they can become infected which may cause blood poisoning or bone infections.

Who gets pressure ulcers?

• Those who have trouble moving and cannot change position themselves
• Those who cannot feel pain over part or all of their body
• Those who are incontinent
• Those who are seriously ill or who have had surgery
• Those who have a poor diet and do not drink enough fluids
• Those who have damaged their spinal cord and can neither move nor feel their bottom and legs.

Where do Pressure Ulcers occur?

Can Pressure Ulcers be prevented?

• Most pressure damage can be prevented with care and attention given to prevention
• Look after your skin by observing, washing and moisturising

• Relieving pressure by moving, standing or turning
• Eating a balanced diet and drinking 6 to 8 glasses of water per day
• Observing skin and reporting redness to a Health Care professional
• Using any equipment that has been provided and returning when no longer needed.

Why is nutrition important?

Good nutrition is vital in preventing and healing pressure ulcers. If you do not get enough calories, protein, vitamins and fluids you may develop a pressure ulcer or your pressure ulcer may fail to heal.