



Preventing Damage to Your Skin from Pressure and Moisture



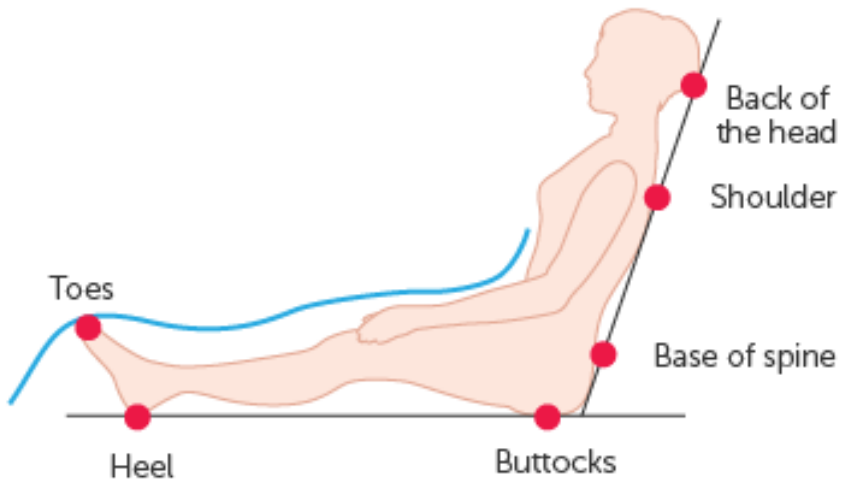
KILBRYDE HOSPICE

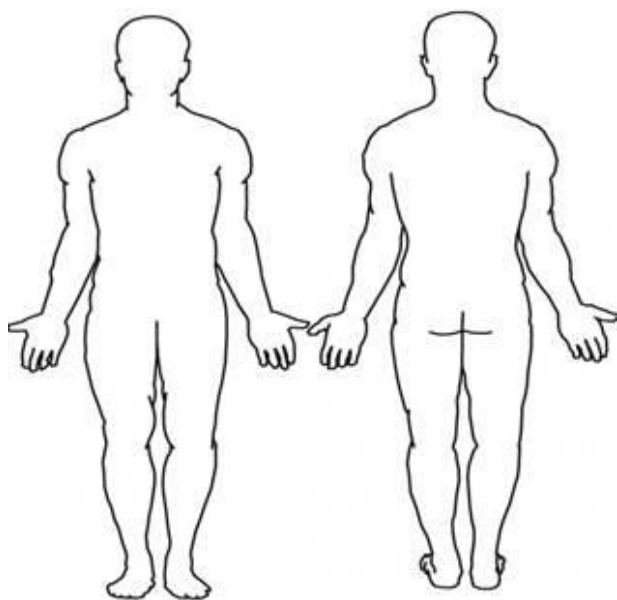
Information for Patients, Families & Carers

Skin can be damaged because of moisture and/or pressure. Moisture damage can build up on the skin as a result of body fluids as a sweat and urine.

Pressure damage is more likely to develop on the parts of your body where the bone is closest to the skin surface. It is usually caused by sitting or lying in the one position for too long without moving. It can also be caused by rubbing or dragging your skin across a surface, such as the floor or mattress.

Your health or social care professional can use the chart below to mark the area they think at risk.





ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT 'SSKIN'?

S – SURFACE

- ❖ Is your mattress, chair, cushion suitable to prevent a pressure ulcer developing?
- ❖ Your nurse or carer can help explain different types of equipment available to you and answer any questions you may have.

S – SKIN INSPECTION

- ❖ It is important to check all areas of your skin for early signs of damage. This should be once a day, or as often as you (or your carer) can manage.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- ❖ **A**rea of skin that are changing colour. If you are light skinned look for red patches. If you are dark skinned look for purplish/bluish patches.
- ❖ **B**reaks in the skin, blisters, dry patches, swelling or shiny areas?
- ❖ **C**heck for any signs of heat and / or pain over red skin.

K – KEEP MOVING

- ❖ Change your position in bed or on your chair as often as you can. Remember, you still need to keep moving even if you are using a special mattress or cushion.
- ❖ Small things standing up or lifting one buttock at a time off the chair can greatly reduce your risk of skin damage.
- ❖ If you need assistance to change your position, your nurse or carer can explain the safest way to do this, including the safe use of any equipment required.

I – INCONTINENCE AND MOISTURE

- ❖ Keep your skin clean. Try to avoid perfumed soaps as they can dry out your skin. Pat skin thoroughly dry with a soft towel as rubbing can cause damage to your skin.
- ❖ Check all areas of your skin including tops of legs, around the groin and bottom, the back and all skin folds.
- ❖ If you are experiencing incontinence, please let your nurse or carer know. They will be able to give you more advice on suitable products to make you feel more comfortable.

N – NUTRITION AND FLUIDS

- ❖ Key factors in improving overall health and well being are a well balanced diet and ensuring that you drink plenty healthy fluids. The current recommendation is that we should drink about two litres of water per day.

If you are not able to eat and drink normally for whatever reason, let your nurse/carers know as soon as possible.

TOP 10 CARE TIPS

1. Avoid any clothing that has tight elastic such as underwear, socks, jogging bottoms etc as they can restrict the circulation.
2. Tight clothing can also rub the skin, which may cause skin damage, especially around the underwear area.
3. Areas that often get missed when you are checking the skin are the ears and tips of toes.
4. Don't use talcum powder on your skin. It can mask areas of redness. Any red area on your skin is a warning.
5. If you have one, you can use a hand held mirror to look at all the vulnerable areas at risk of pressure and moisture damage. This can be helpful. It allows you to see areas you wouldn't normally see.
6. If you are the main carer for a patient who may be incontinent, always try to clean them as soon as they are wet or soiled.
7. Drinks containing caffeine such as tea, coffee, sugary drinks may encourage you to go to the toilet more often, especially at night. Some alternative drinks are water, sugar free diluting juices and decaffeinated tea and coffee.
8. Alternatively, limiting tea and coffee from teatime can reduce night time toilet visits.
9. If you are caring for someone who isn't eating well as they used to, try encouraging smaller more frequent meals.
10. If the person you are caring for develops skin damage, even though you have done everything to prevent it: Never Blame Yourself
11. Your nurse and carer are there to help. Just ask.

About Kilbryde Hospice

Kilbryde Hospice is a voluntary independent hospice which exists to provide specialist palliative care to patients with life limiting progressive illnesses and to their relatives and carers. Services provided by Kilbryde Hospice are available to those people with palliative care needs. The service is provided free and does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, faith, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age or financial means.

We would like to hear from you!

We take all compliments, comments and complaints about our service seriously and deal with them in confidence. Kilbryde Hospice welcomes feedback on any of our services which can be submitted by post, or on our website.

www.kilbrydehospice.org.uk or by Email: info@kilbrydehospice.org.uk

Contact Us

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Registered Scottish Charity No. 032424

Registered Company No. SC224366

Should you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by Kilbryde Hospice, you may contact Healthcare Improvement Scotland regarding services delivered within Kilbryde Hospice or within a person's own home.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB, Telephone 0131 623 4300

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

Kilbryde Hospice aims to communicate effectively with all patients and carers. This document is available in braille format for those who are visually impaired. A translated version is also available for those whose first language is not English.

To facilitate this service, please call 01355 202020, or Email your request to info@kilbrydehospice.org.uk