



THE CARE PARTNER PROJECT™

How to Get the Care You Want
for the People You Love

ABOUT BED SORES

Bed sores are pits or breaks in the skin in areas that don't get much blood flow (bony areas) or where sweat collects (folds of skin). They can be a dangerous tunnel for infection. Bed sores are much easier to prevent than they are to heal.

RISK FACTORS

Thin skin, stroke, lung conditions, cancer treatments, diabetes, spinal cord injury, bed/chair bound, poor circulation, very thin or overweight, age 65 or older

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Any breaks or scrapes in the skin
- Abnormally white patches of skin (especially on bony areas)
- Pinkness, redness or swelling in the skin that doesn't go away in minutes
- Areas of skin that are extra-warm

Copyright© The Care Partner Project™
2021 All Rights Reserved.

The Care Partner Project checklists are for your education only, not intended to substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

CHECKLIST

PREVENT PAINFUL BED SORES

- Help make sure your loved one changes positions every two hours — even more often if your loved one can manage it. (It helps to set a timer.)
- Ask for an alternating air pressure mattress and some type of pad to absorb moisture.
- Make sure your loved one has foam cushions between ankles and knees, for elbows, and back of head.
- If the hospital gown or sheets become wet, get help to change them as soon as possible. If you are able-bodied, help change the sheets.
- Help make sure that nothing rubs or scratches your loved one's skin—ask nurses about barrier cream for fragile skin areas.
- When your loved one gets out of bed, either alone or with help, make sure it's done very gently to avoid scraping any skin.
- Ask the attending doctor about “upping” the protein in your loved one's diet. Ask if it's OK for you to bring high-protein snacks, drinks or food.
- It's OK to ask for the hospital wound care specialist if you have any concerns. Remember, bed sores are much easier to prevent than to heal!

MAKE SURE NURSES CHECK YOUR LOVED ONE'S SKIN every day—or even more often.

THIS IS WHERE NURSES WILL LOOK:

1. The bony areas (see blue dots):
2. Areas where sweat collects:
 - Between buttocks
 - Between folds of fat
 - Under breasts

IF SKIN PROBLEMS APPEAR:

Make sure no pressure is put on the abnormal areas of skin for the next 24-48 hours, or until the skin is back to normal. Share this checklist with your loved one's nurses and don't be afraid to ask nurses for their attention and help.

