THE CARE PARTNER PROJECT

ABOUT BED SORES:

Also known as pressure wounds, bed sores are pits or breaks in the skin in bony areas that don't get much blood flow, or in folds of skin where sweat collects.

Any break in the skin can be a dangerous tunnel for infection.

Bed sores are much easier to prevent than 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 cuts, tears, 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.*

HOW TO HELP

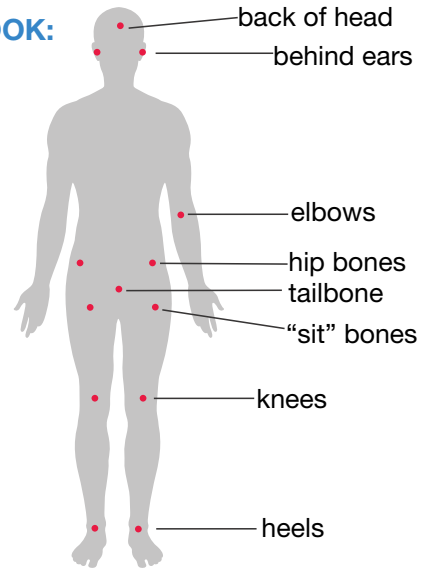
PREVENT BED SORES:

- ☐ **Help make sure your loved one changes positions** every two hours— or more often if your loved one can manage. Set a timer!
- ☐ **Ask for an alternating air pressure mattress** and some type of pad to absorb moisture.
- ☐ **Make sure your loved one has pillows** between ankles and knees, for elbows, and back of the head.
- ☐ **Ask a nurse or the physical therapist** to show you how to arrange the pillows.
- ☐ **If the hospital gown or sheets become wet,** get help to change them as soon as possible.
- ☐ **Help make sure that nothing rubs or scratches** your loved one's skin—ask nurses about barrier cream.
- ☐ **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 dietitian about "upping" the protein** in your loved one's diet. Ask if it's okay for you to bring high-protein snacks, drinks or food.
- ☐ **It's okay to ask for the hospital wound care specialist** if you have any concerns. Remember, bed sores are much easier to prevent than 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.
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.

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