

STOP THE PRESSURE DAY 2020



sia spinal injuries association
FOR LIFE AFTER SPINAL CORD INJURY

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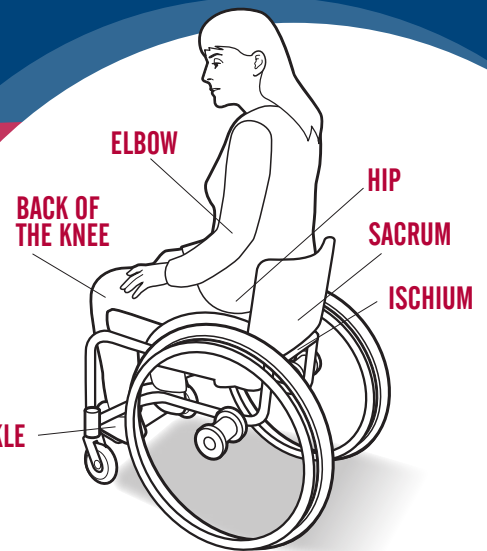
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Living with a spinal cord injury puts you at high risk of developing pressure ulcers, but skin damage is preventable and by equipping yourself and your PAs/Carers with the right knowledge you can reduce the risk of these occurring. Stop and Act!

#STOPTHEPRESSURE

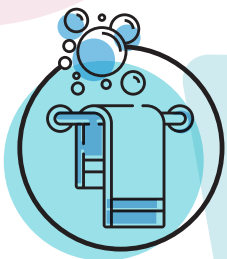
ACTIONS TO AVOID PRESSURE ULCERS:

You should always check your skin before you apply pressure to an area to ensure it is safe to do so. This would include a minimum of twice daily if in your wheelchair or prior to any change of position when in bed. It should be part of your daily routine.



1. TWICE DAILY SKIN CHECKS

- Make it part of your routine
- Use a mirror for hard-to-see areas or take a photo on your phone.
- Look for changes in skin colour, blisters, scraped or dry skin. Also check for areas of localised heat particularly over bony prominences i.e. ischium and hips to detect a bursa.
- Ask your PAs/Carers to let you know of any reddened areas.
- If a red area does not change colour or does not turn from white to red in 6 seconds **STAY OFF IT UNTIL RESOLVED.** Do not ignore warning signs!
- Every red mark or spot has the potential to be a pressure ulcer.
- Know your areas that are most vulnerable.



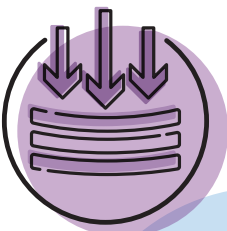
2. KEEP THE SKIN CLEAN AND DRY

- A good continence routine avoids moisture to the skin
- Pay attention to skin folds
- Moisturise skin daily



3. EAT A HEALTHY DIET

- Keep hydrated – drink 2-3 litres a day
- Eat a balanced nutritious diet
- Maintain a healthy weight



4. RELIEVE PRESSURE

- Change your position regularly in bed and in the chair. This can be done using reclining functions on your wheelchair or by you or your carers leaning you slightly forward and side to side. **Every 1-2 hours.**
- Use pillows at night to maintain positioning and keep your heels and ankles pressure free.
- Think about your posture, the surfaces you are sitting/lying on – to give even weight distribution. Have a full-length mirror so you can check your shoulders, hips, knees are level.
- Clothes and equipment – is there anything digging in your skin?
- Are your transfers avoiding shearing? Perform safe transfers – do not drag or scrape your bottom when moving in and out of your wheelchair. Check your pressure relieving equipment is fit for purpose before using it... **this means every time.** i.e. mattress before getting into bed and cushions before getting in wheelchair.