

# Preventing Bedsores at Home: Your Daily Guide

Medical-Surgical · Integumentary / Wounds & Skin

A bedsore (pressure injury) is damage to the skin and the tissue under it from pressure that lasts too long, often over a bone. Moving often, clean dry skin, and good food help prevent bedsores.

## Who is at risk

- People who stay in bed or a wheelchair most of the day
- People who cannot feel or move part of the body, leak urine or stool, or eat little

## Change position often

- **In bed: change position at least every 2 hours.**
- **In a chair: change position at least every hour.** If you can, shift your weight every 15 minutes.
- Lie tilted partly to the side, with a pillow behind the back.

## Protect heels and bony spots

- Put a pillow under the calves so the heels float off the bed.
- Use the special mattress and cushion from your care team. Do not use donut cushions.

## Care for the skin and eat well

- Clean the skin right away after urine or stool leaks. Pat it dry.
- Use barrier cream, and lotion on dry skin.

- Eat protein at each meal, such as eggs, milk, meat, or beans. Drink fluids, unless you have a fluid limit.

## Check the skin every day

- Look at the tailbone, hips, heels, elbows, and back of the head.
- Press any red spot gently. Red that does not fade is an early bedsore.
- **Never rub or massage red skin over a bone.**

## Call your provider today if you have

- A red or purple spot that does not fade
- A blister, open skin, or a dark spot
- **Fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or higher with a sore, or redness spreading from a sore:** call right away or go to urgent care

## Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- Fever with new confusion, or you are very hard to wake
- Fever with fast breathing or dizziness
- Cold, clammy, or blotchy skin

*This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.*

Online: [nclexpace.com/patient-education/pressure-injury-prevention-at-home/patient](https://nclexpace.com/patient-education/pressure-injury-prevention-at-home/patient)

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