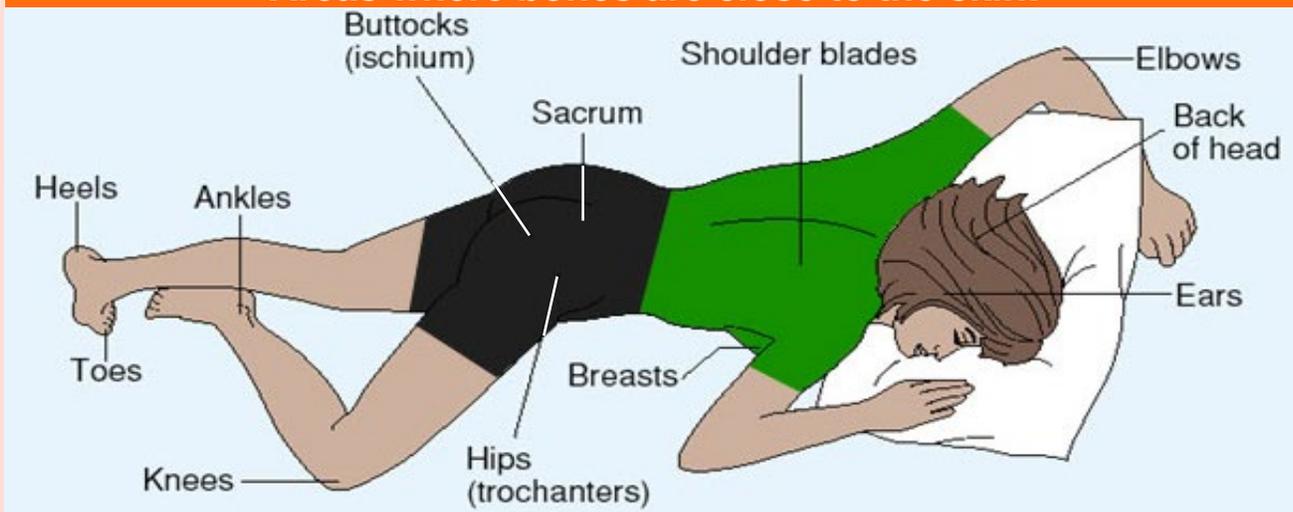


## Pressure Ulcer

- ◆ Pressure ulcer (decubitus ulcer) also called bed or pressure sore is damage to the skin caused by pressure.
- ◆ Pressure ulcers often look like a minor redness in the skin although they can initially hide more damage under the skin's surface.
- ◆ Pressure ulcers can be painful and they can become infected sometimes causing blood poisoning or bone infections.
- ◆ In severe cases, they can spread deeply under the skin and some of the underlying muscle or bone may be destroyed.
- ◆ Individuals mostly at risk of developing pressure ulcers include those who: Are confined to bed or chair and unable to move independently, Have poor circulation, Have frequent moist skin, Are elderly or with poor food, fluid intake, Have prior history.
- ◆ **The signs to look for** especially on the areas where bones are close to the skin are: Red / purple / blue skin, Blister, Swelling, Dryness or patches, Shiny areas, Cracks, Calluses, Wrinkles.
- ◆ **The signs to feel for** are: Hard or Warm areas.

### Areas where bones are close to the skin:



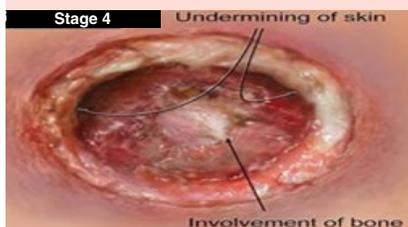
- ◆ Pressure ulcers are grouped into four stages from stage one to four according to depth and severity, with stage four being the most severe.
- ◆ Bed sores in early stages 1 & 2 may heal with relief of pressure and good skin care.

- ◆ The skin is not broken.
- ◆ Skin appears red on people with lighter skin color and doesn't briefly lighten (blanch) when touched.
- ◆ On people with darker skin, the skin may show discoloration, and it doesn't blanch when touched.
- ◆ The site may be tender, painful, firm, soft, warm or cool compared with the surrounding skin.



- ◆ The outer layer of skin (epidermis) and part of the underlying layer of skin (dermis) is damaged or lost.
- ◆ The wound may be shallow and pinkish or red. It may look like a fluid-filled or a ruptured blister.

- ◆ At this stage the ulcer is a deep wound. The loss of skin usually exposes some fat.
- ◆ The bottom of the wound may have some yellowish dead tissue.
- ◆ The damage may extend beyond the primary wound below layers of healthy skin.



- ◆ A stage IV ulcer shows large-scale loss of tissue. It may expose muscle, bone or tendons.
- ◆ The damage often extends beyond the primary wound below layers of healthy skin.
- ◆ The bottom of the wound likely contains dead tissue that's yellowish or dark and crusty.

### Pressure Ulcer Prevention:

- Encourage individuals to move at least every hour, and if they depend on you, change their position at least every 15 minutes in chair and every two hours in bed. Avoid friction (from rubbing, dragging) and shear (sliding down the bed).
- Provide adequate hydration and a balanced diet.
- Assess the skin daily. Pay special attention to feet. Those with decrease circulation may not feel pain.
- Keep skin clean and dry at all times. Prevent moisture from sitting on the skin over a period of time as it allows bacteria to grow. Dry skin gently to prevent damage. Avoid massaging skin over bony parts of the body.
- Bathe or shower in warm (not hot) water using a mild cleanser or soap.
- Use a moisturizing lotion to prevent skin from drying out and cracking.
- Make use of pillows and other products like cushions, pads, and mattresses to relieve pressure.