

**Welcome home!** It must feel great to be out of hospital and we want to make sure your health and wellbeing only improves once you're back at home.

You may have received information about pressure injury prevention (PIP) while you were in hospital. This brochure can help you to take control of your own health and prevent pressure injuries from developing or getting worse, now that you are home.

## What is a pressure injury?

A pressure injury can also be called a pressure sore, pressure ulcer or bed sore. It can develop quickly, cause pain, get infected, leave scars and may delay your recovery.

Some signs that show your skin might be damaged are:

- 🔍 ongoing pain in one spot
- 🔍 red/purple/maroon skin — skin colour may differ from the surrounding area
- 🔍 blistering
- 🔍 swelling
- 🔍 dry/itchy
- 🔍 shiny areas
- 🔍 warm/cool areas of skin
- 🔍 very cold areas of skin that could indicate poor circulation.

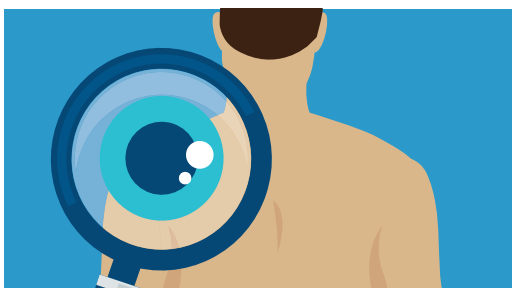
If you notice any of these signs, please speak with your care provider. Since you may be unable to see all of the areas on your body, your care provider may request your permission to look at your skin.

Remember that anyone of any age, sex, or ethnicity can get a pressure injury. Some things that may make you more likely to get a pressure injury are:

- general poor health or weakness
- poor mobility
- bowel or bladder incontinence
- poor diet and/or fluid intake
- unplanned weight loss/gain
- reduced feeling (sensation) on your skin or loss of movement in your arms and legs due to a medical problem e.g. stroke, diabetes, spinal cord injury or multiple sclerosis
- very moist or dry skin
- having a pressure injury in the past.

## 5 Key messages to help prevent pressure injuries:

### 1. Check your skin or let others help you with this



PIP TIP: If you wish, a close friend or family member can also look at an area that you can't see well enough.

### 2. Special equipment

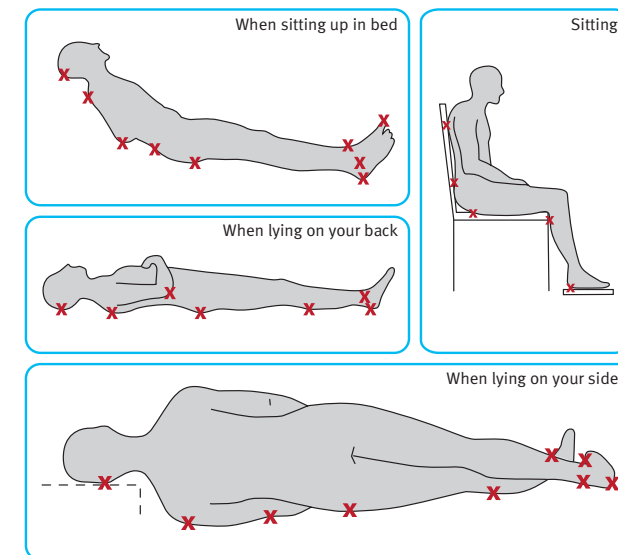
If you have any signs of skin damage speak to your healthcare professional about equipment, such as a special mattress or cushion that might help you.

### 3. Change your position

When you get home you may still not be moving as much as you were before going to hospital. If you cannot move yourself ask your carer, a friend or family member to help you to change position. Even small movements help and you should try and move as much as possible.

**Positioning:** Pressure injuries often form over bony areas, especially the heels, elbows, hips, buttock and tailbone. However, they can occur anywhere there is continued pressure to the skin. Regular, small movements of your body are recommended.

The diagram below illustrates the areas of your body at greatest risk of pressure injuries.



PIP TIP: It is important to change your position at least every two hours whether you are lying in bed or sitting.

#### 4. Incontinence and excess moisture can damage your skin.

Keep your skin clean and dry. Use a pH balanced mild soap/shower wash and consider a water-based moisturiser on your skin.

Talk to your healthcare professional if you need help to manage incontinence issues.

#### 5. Eating healthy meals and drinking enough fluid is very important.

Follow your healthcare professional's advice on how much fluid you should drink each day. Everyone has different dietary needs but including some good proteins (e.g. meat, chicken, fish or eggs) with your daily meals can help build strong skin. If you are eating less than usual or have lost weight without trying please speak to your healthcare professional who may refer you to a Dietitian.



**PIP TIP:** A pressure injury may look minor, such as a small patch of red skin, but they can hide more damage under the surface.

**Remember that if you're ever in doubt, speak with your healthcare professional to discuss your concerns.**

**To learn more go to:**  
[www.health.qld.gov.au/healthcondition/](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/healthcondition/)

**Scan the QR code to watch our preventing pressure injuries video**






**Enjoy being back at home and we hope you stay safe.**

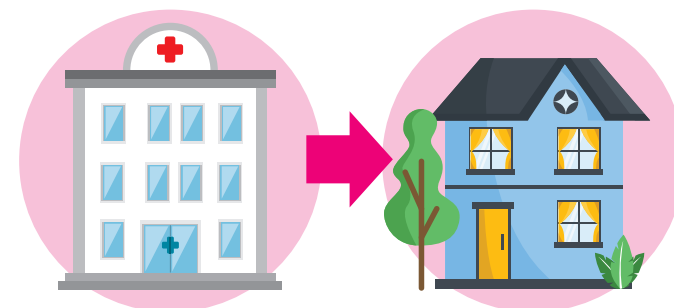


Developed by Patient Safety and Quality, Clinical Excellence Queensland in conjunction with clinicians and consumers.

This patient information brochure supports a number of the 2nd Edition of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards including:

-  Clinical governance
-  Partnering with consumers
-  Comprehensive care

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## PREVENTING PRESSURE INJURIES AT HOME

**Information to help you at home.**

**Scan the QR code to watch our preventing pressure injuries video**

