

Guidelines for Preventing Pressure Wounds

- **If you will be in bed or a chair for long periods of time:**

- Check your skin every day for red areas or open wounds
- Sores and wounds are most likely to happen in bony areas – for example, the back of your heels, your buttocks and tail bone, the outside of the hip, the inside of the knees and ankles
- Use a pillow to keep your heels from touching the bed
- If you are laying on your side, or your knees / ankles touch when you are sitting in the chair, use a pillow or wedge as a cushion to keep your knees and ankles apart
- Change position in bed at least once every 2 hours
- Change position in the chair every 15 minutes
- Ask your medical team about a special mattress or cushion to help decrease pressure on your skin while in bed or the chair
- Do NOT raise the head of the bed more than necessary – do not keep the head of the bed raised for long periods of time. This will increase pressure on your backside and can lead to skin breakdown
- If you need to raise the head of the bed, also bend your knees so that you will not slide down. This will keep your skin from rubbing against the sheets or mattress
- Make sure you do not rub your skin against the mattress or sheets when you move yourself or others help move you – too much friction can damage the skin
- If you are not able to control your bowels or bladder:
 - Clean your skin as soon as it is soiled
 - Use pads or undergarments with a quick-drying surface
 - Protect your skin with a cream or ointment – your doctor, nurse or physical therapist can help you choose the best one
- Check with the physical therapist to see which exercises will help you get back your strength and mobility
- Eating a healthy diet will help prevent wounds and will help you heal