

# **STOP** the **pressure...** make the **move**



Does your skin  
look like this...



...or this

## What you can do to prevent pressure ulcers?

# What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer (sometimes called a bed sore) is an area of damaged skin that can be caused by continuous pressure on any part of the body. It can range from a reddening of the skin to a deep wound.



# How do you get a pressure ulcer?

When we sit still in a chair or lie in a bed for a period of time and don't move you may notice that your skin feels uncomfortable or maybe even painful.

When this happens we usually change our position to stop the uncomfortable feeling.

Sometimes though we are unable to change position. With some conditions the sense of feeling is also affected. For example if you have diabetes pain in your feet may not be felt to trigger the need to move.

When we stay in the same position for too long without moving, the skin can get damaged. The damage is caused by pressure and any wounds that occur as a result are called pressure ulcers.

# Am I likely to get a pressure ulcer?

We can avoid pressure ulcers by frequently changing position.

Anything that stops us moving or making small movements can make you vulnerable to a pressure ulcer.

Think about the risk of pressure ulcers when:

- You are ill and/or have to stay in bed or a chair when at home or hospital.
- You cannot move because of your illness, medical condition or specialist equipment.
- When movement is painful.
- If you have reduced pain sensations or looking after someone who is not able to express their pain.

Some people live with an increased risk of pressure ulcers e.g. those who use a wheelchair.



# What can you do to stop pressure ulcers?

- Keep moving by altering your position frequently, even small movements can help.
- Eat well by having a balanced diet and keeping hydrated.
- Protect your skin by keeping it clean using a mild soap and water and drying well.
- Use pressure relief equipment that your healthcare professional may have provided.
- Check your skin each day for any changes.

**Ask your carer to help prevent pressure ulcers by sharing this leaflet.**