Well Informed



Promoting the health and welfare of people with developmental disabilities wherever they choose to live, work and spend their day.

Wound Care Basics

A wound is a bodily injury. A wound can be acute, healing sometime between two weeks and six months or chronic, meaning that it takes six months or longer to heal. Keeping wounds clean and dry, as well as relieving the area of pressure, can help to promote healing.

Factors that impair healing

Advanced age

Poor diet, not getting enough healthy food

Being very over or under a healthy weight

Poor circulation and breathing problems

Any condition that hinders the immune system or its ability to fight off infection

Smoking

Incontinence, or the inability to control bladder or bowels

Some medications, including steroids and radiation

Ongoing health conditions such as diabetes

Stress applied to the wound

When should a health care provider be contacted?

- If there is increased pain that radiates from the wound
- If there is an expanding redness around the wound or the wound is expanding
- If there is an increase in drainage from the wound
- If there is an odor coming from the wound, which can indicate dying tissue
- If the wound does not appear to be healing

Always share information about changes in appearance, pain or other symptoms with approprite health care providers.



How can I promote healing?

Bathe and clean skin daily

Keep wounded area dry

Frequently relieve pressure on the wound

Avoid harsh soaps and all powders; use doctorapproved moisturizer

Encourage drinking water to keep skin hydrated Report changes in appetite that limit nutrition

Always...

Wash and dry skin and change clothing immediately after any leakage of stool or urine

Pay attention to and document health changes

Share information with other providers as appropriate to ensure continuity in care



Department of Developmental Disabilities

What are pressure wounds?

Pressure wounds can be caused by friction or constant pressure on skin and tissue. They may also be caused by shearing.

Shearing occurs when two surfaces move in the opposite direction. For example, when a hospital bed is elevated at the head, a person may slide down in bed.

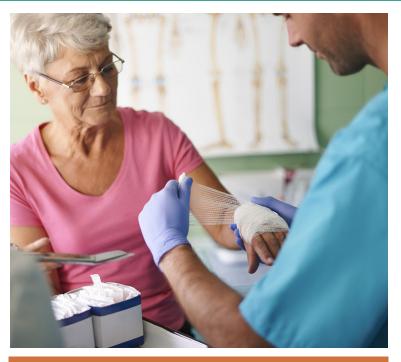
As the tailbone moves down, the skin over the bone may stay in place essentially pulling in the opposite direction. That motion may injure tissue and blood vessels, making the site more vulnerable to damage from sustained pressure.



Pressure wounds are injuries to skin and underlying tissue that result from prolonged pressure on the area.

Bedsores most often develop on skin that covers bony areas of the body, such as the heels, ankles, hips and tailbone.

- Lean from side to side to relieve pressure on the buttocks
- Tilt from side to side to relieve pressure on hips and ankles
- Reposition frequently, about every two hours



Who are wound specialists?

They are nurses, physicians and physical therapists who work together to formulate a plan of care for acute and chronic wounds.

Who should see a wound specialist?

People with post-operative wounds, or wounds healing from a surgery

People with diabetic ulcers

People with pressure wounds or a history of pressure wounds

People with vascular ulcers

People with wounds caused by any adverse effects from radiation therapy

