

Key Messages

Pressure Injury Prevention (Adults) in Hospital



Did you know?

- Approximately **1 in 6 adult patients** in Alberta hospitals has a pressure injury, and over 70% of those patients develop their pressure injury while in hospital despite a risk assessment (eg. Braden scale) being completed for 90% of these patients on admission.
- 18% of pressure injuries are caused by medical devices (eg. IV tubing, oxygen tubing, etc.)
- Hospital acquired pressure injuries are **preventable**.
- All patients in hospital are at risk of pressure injury.
- Pressure injuries can occur in as little as a few hours.
- Pressure injury prevention is a required organizational practice for hospitals by **Accreditation Canada**.

Impact:

- Pressure injuries have a significant and negative impact on a patients' health and quality of life. They can result in pain, infection, sepsis and death.
- Pressure injuries are associated with an extended length of stay in the hospital and are very costly to treat.

What you can do:

- All care areas (emergency, operating room, critical care, diagnostic imaging, inpatient units, etc) play a key role in preventing hospital-acquired pressure injuries.
- Patients and families should be engaged early and provided the opportunity, knowledge and skill to play a key role in preventing hospital-acquired pressure injuries.
- Skin inspections should be conducted daily as part of routine assessments.
- Patients at risk may require a specific support surface (mattress, wheelchair cushion) to redistribute pressure more evenly and wick away moisture and heat.
- Offloading pressure over bony prominences is the goal of repositioning. Turning patients every two hours without off-loading pressure will not help prevent pressure injuries.
- Patients should be encouraged to turn themselves in bed, ambulate frequently, and ask for assistance to move (if they are able) to the highest level of their function.
- Keep skin free from excess moisture as often as possible. Moisture (e.g. perspiration, incontinence) weakens the skin and puts it at higher risk of developing pressure injuries
- Malnutrition is a risk factor for the development of pressure injuries. Optimize nutrition and hydration by offering drinks and snacks, assessing and managing fluid balance, and ensuring that the at-risk patient has a dietitian consult as required.



Questions? Get Involved?

If you have any questions or would like to get involved; contact NRV SCN at: NRV.SCN@ahs.ca