

Tissue Viability Service

0300 330 5777*

bromh.cccpod2@nhs.net

Who to get in touch with if you are concerned you are at risk of developing a pressure ulcer

You should get professional advice from a community healthcare professional. This might be your:

- District Nurse
- Practice Nurse
- GP
- Carer; if carers visit you at home and are concerned about your pressure areas, they can request a visit from a District Nurse.

Note: Your skin can develop a pressure ulcer in just a few hours if pressure is not relieved.

The longer this continues, the deeper the ulcer can become.

*Calls charged at local rate

**Bromley
Healthcare**
better together

The Tissue Viability service is provided by Bromley Healthcare, an award-winning social enterprise working with the NHS, delivering a wide range of community healthcare services to people of all ages in Bromley and its neighbouring boroughs.

We provide a wide range of nursing, medical and therapy services for adults and children. These include District Nursing, Health Visiting, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. 98% of our patients would recommend our services to their friends and family.

Tell us what you think

We want you to be happy with the service you receive from us, but we know that every so often something might go wrong. If you're unhappy with the care you receive or an element of our service, we want to hear from you.

Of course, we also want to hear from you if you're happy with the care you're receiving - it's good to be able to thank the team and let people know they're doing a good job, so if you have a compliment or congratulation, we'd like to hear from you.

If we are unable to resolve your concerns or you would like to take the matter further please contact us at the address below.

Central Court
1b Knoll Rise
Orpington BR6 OJA

020 8315 8880

bromh.feedback@nhs.net

bromleyhealthcare.org.uk

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**Reduce your risk of
developing pressure ulcers**
Bromley Tissue Viability Service

What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer (or bed sore) is damage to the skin that you can see. It may also involve the tissues beneath your skin.

What causes them to develop?

This damage may be caused by some of the following reasons:

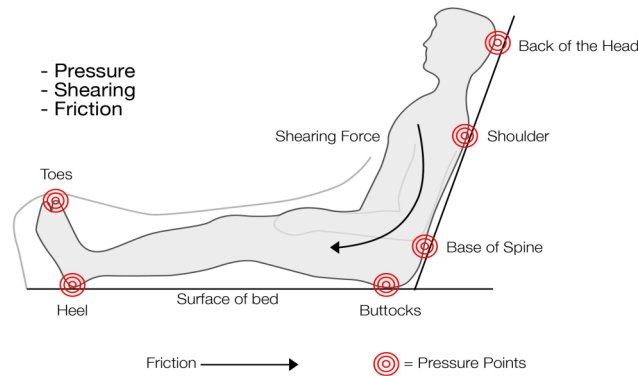
Continued pressure on the skin by the weight of the body can cause your blood vessels to be squashed. This may restrict or stop the blood supply to that area. As a result, your tissue cells can become seriously damaged.

Skin under pressure from the weight of your body can also be at risk of damage. This can happen when you're sliding down or being pulled up in a bed or chair and your body tries to move but your skin doesn't. If your skin is damp or wet then the risk is increased.

Friction damage occurs when the top layers of your skin are rubbed away which may cause blisters or ulcers to develop.

Where do pressure ulcers develop?

The following diagram shows the most vulnerable areas where pressure damage can occur.



How to reduce your risk of developing a pressure ulcer

- Move and change your position regularly.
- Ask for help if you're unable to change your position yourself.
- Check your skin regularly for the early signs (a mirror may help you check areas that are difficult to see).
- Clean and dry your skin as soon as possible if it becomes soiled or wet.
- Don't rub or massage the areas of skin at risk of pressure ulcer.
- Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.
- Use any prescribed equipment that you have (e.g. cushion). Do not place blankets over this equipment as it will reduce the effect.

Signs and symptoms

Are you experiencing soreness or pain in the areas that are at risk from pressure?

This is an important warning that damage may be occurring.

Has your skin changed colour?

If your skin has discoloured and doesn't recover when the pressure is relieved and feels hot to the touch, this might be another sign of pressure damage.

Do you have any blisters or swelling in the areas that are at risk from pressure?

This may indicate damage is occurring.

What increases your risk of developing a pressure sore?

- A serious illness or condition.
- Poor circulation.
- A previous pressure ulcer.
- Difficulty in moving, or being unable to change your sitting or lying position for long periods of time.
- Not eating a balanced diet or drinking enough fluids.
- Problems with your bladder or bowels.
- Your skin becoming moist or wet.
- Smoking—cigarettes or cigars constrict blood vessels and reduce your blood flow.