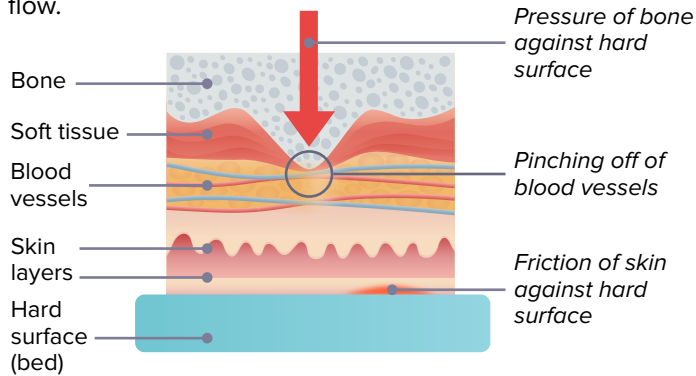


STAGING A PRESSURE ULCER



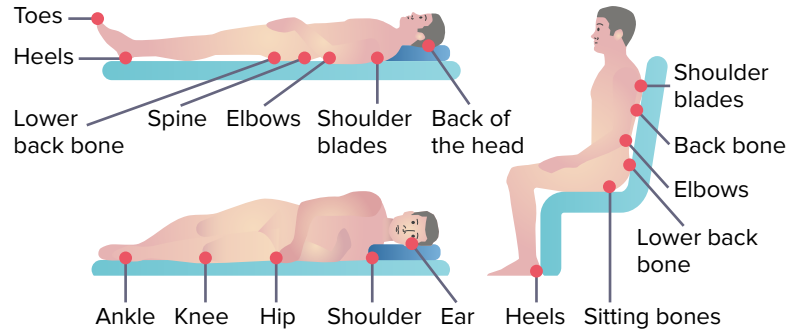
Definition

Pressure ulcers are injuries to the skin and underlying tissue caused by prolonged pressure, which restricts blood flow.



Common Locations

Individuals who spend long periods of time in bed or seated in a wheelchair are most at risk. Pressure ulcers most often affect the tissue over bony parts of the body, such as those illustrated here:



Staging

Stage 1		Non-blanching erythema with intact epidermis
Stage 2		Partial-thickness ulcer, involving epidermis and dermis
Stage 3		Full-thickness ulcer extending through dermis into subcutaneous tissue
Stage 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep tissue destruction extending through fascia May involve muscle, bone, tendon
Unstageable		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth of injury unknown due to presence of necrotic tissue or eschar Surgical debridement required for staging

Prevention

- Encourage or assist with position changes, at least every 1–2 hours.
- Avoid prolonged moisture; protect skin from urine, stool or wound drainage if present.
- Utilize specialized mattresses, pads or cushions to relieve and redistribute pressure.
- Maintain tissue integrity with a well balanced, protein-rich diet.

CLINICAL TIP:

Always do a full head-to-toe skin assessment upon admission or transfer to your unit, and document appropriately.

NOTES

