



## DAILY SKIN CARE AND INSPECTION CHECKLIST

### Skin Inspection

#### Front of the body

- Knees
- Heels, ankles
- Elbows, shoulders
- Cheek bones, ears

#### Back of the body

- Back of the head, ears
- Tailbone and entire spine (neck to tailbone)
- Shoulder blades, elbows

#### **\*Be sure to document any changes**

(i.e. redness, warmth, spongy, hard, bruising, sores, scrapes, etc.)

### Caring for Skin

#### Movement and Positioning

- Change positions in a chair every 15- 20 minutes by moving from side to side and leaning forward.
- Suggestion: When watching TV, change position or stand up (if able) at every commercial break and drink some water or juice.
- Use a chair with arms to help stand and change position. Chair should have a foam pad or a gel filled pad. Get rid of any donut shaped cushions and well-worn chair bottoms.
- Change positions in bed every hour. Have someone help if the individual is not able to move by his or herself.
- Make sure bed linens are smooth and dry.
- If the patient or resident is dizzy or unsteady when moving, ask the doctor or nurse for a physical therapy consult.
- Use bed mattress of good quality foam or filled with air to redistribute pressure.
- Use foam pad or gel pad in between bony areas that are pressed against another body part or pressed against the bed or chair surface.

Examples:

- Lying flat in the bed: head, heels, tailbone, hip, shoulder blades.
- Lying on the side: sides of the feet and ankles, knees, ear, cheekbone, hip, elbow and shoulder.
- Sitting on a chair: tailbone, shoulders, elbow and wrist.



## **Movement and Positioning (cont.)**

- Suspend heels with pillows under the calves, NEVER under the knees.
- To prevent skin shear or pressure, make sure clothing fits well and is not too loose or too tight.
- Always lift the person up or off from a surface using a draw sheet or lift equipment. Never drag or slide someone across a surface.
- Individually fit any necessary wheelchairs to ensure the right size. Have the doctor, nurse or physical therapist check the fit annually to account for any physical changes.

## **Nutrition and Hydration**

- Have a glass and pitcher of water next to the sitting chair.
- Goal: Pitcher should be empty at the end of each day.
- If individuals are eating at home, shop for easy-to-prepare foods that have adequate nutritious calories, including protein. Consider a home delivery program for meals.
- Provide one choice of sweet treats in the tiniest portion: small bag of mini candies, slice of pie, small package of cookies, or pint of frozen sorbet or ice cream.
- Ask the doctor or nurse for nutrition consult to teach the best nutritious food choices.

## **General Skin Care**

- Try not to bathe every day, as that can dry the skin.
- Use a soft cloth or sponge and mild cleansing soap when bathing. Don't scrub: Use gentle pressure to wash.
- Use a moisturizer on the skin every day.
- Remember to moisturize the feet, but not the toes! Keep the toes dry.
- Use skin wipes and skin protectant after toileting or before a new incontinence brief.
- Use dry pads in bed or in a chair to wick moisture away from the skin.

Source:

Preventing pressure ulcers. Available at: <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000147.htm>. Accessed November 4, 2014.