Nutrition for Preventing and Treating Pressure Ulcers

What are pressure ulcers?

Pressure ulcers happen when something is always pressing or rubbing against an area of skin. This pressure can cause less blood going to the area. This can cause your skin to develop sores and pressure ulcers.

What are the risk factors?

You may develop a pressure ulcer if you have diabetes or blood flow problems, or if you are:

- Over 65 years of age
- using a wheelchair or staying in bed for long periods of time
- not able to move some parts of your body without help
- not able to control when you urinate or have a bowel movement
- not eating a healthy diet
- have recently lost weight
- not drinking enough water

What are the most common places to develop a pressure ulcer?

- Buttocks or bottom
- Elbow
- Hips
- Heels
- Ankles
- Shoulders
- Back
- Back of the head

Can diet and nutrition help to prevent pressure ulcers?

Eating enough food and choosing a variety of foods from each food group at meal times will help stop pressure ulcers from happening. Follow these guidelines to reduce your risk:

- Eat a healthy diet
- Eat enough calories to maintain your weight

Patient Food and Nutrition Services

- Make sure you are eating enough protein
- Drink enough water, 6-8 cups a day

Eat a Well-Balanced Diet:
- Make sure to eat foods that are high in protein at every meal and snack (such as milk, yogurt, beans, eggs, meat, fish)
- Drink plenty of fluids like water, unless you have been told by your doctor or dietitian to limit how much you drink.

Food Group	Recommended Foods
Meat and Other Protein Foods (2-3 servings a day) A serving size for meat is about the size of a deck of cards and a 3 oz serving of fish is about the size of a checkbook	3 oz. beef, veal, pork, lamb, poultry 3 oz. fish or seafood 1 egg and ¼ cup egg product ½ cup tofu ½ cup beans like kidney, black, or pinto beans 2 Tbsp peanut butter
Milk and Milk Products (2-3 servings a day)	1 cup whole, 2%, 1%, or skim milk Cheese (1 oz looks like 6 stacked dice) 1 cup yogurt
Grains (6-11 servings a day)	1 slice bread (whole grain, whole wheat) ½ cup pasta (whole grain, whole wheat) Cereal (½ cup hot or 1 cup cold) 4 Crackers or pretzels ½ cup rice
Fruit and Vegetables (5-6 servings a day)	1 small fresh fruit, ½ cup canned fruit, 1 cup raw leafy vegetables, or ½ cup cooked vegetables
Fats and Oils (2 servings a day)	1 tsp oil (Canola, vegetable, olive) 1 tsp soft margarine 1 Tbsp Mayonnaise
Beverages (6-8 servings a day)	1 cup water ½ cup 100% fruit juice 1 cup decaffeinated coffee/tea

Drink Nutritional Drinks:

Your dietitian may ask you to drink a nutritional supplement such as Carnation Instant Breakfast Essentials ®, Ensure Plus®, Boost Breeze®, or Glucerna®. These will help to make sure your body is getting enough energy and protein to help heal pressure sores.

Take a Daily Multivitamin:

Taking a daily multivitamin will make sure that your body is getting all the vitamins and minerals that may be missing in your meals.

Write down what you eat so you can work with your doctor or dietitian about a plan to help heal your pressure ulcers.

Date:	Foods:
Day 1: __/__/__	
Day 2: __/__/__	
Day 3: __/__/__	
Day 4: __/__/__	
Day 5: __/__/__	
Day 6: __/__/__	
Day 7: __/__/__	