

# Skin Management

The importance of effective skin care in spinal cord injury

**Why ???**

# Anatomy of the Skin

Consists of 3 layers:

-Epidermis

-Dermis

-Hypodermis

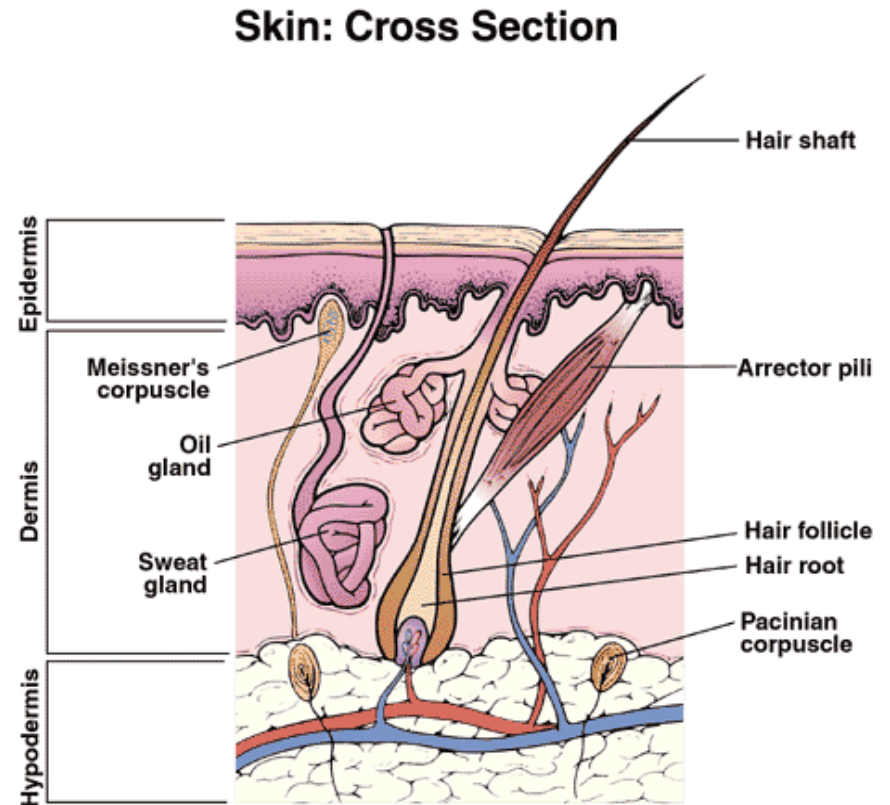


Image gained from  
[www.med.umich.edu/](http://www.med.umich.edu/)

# *Functions of the skin*

1. **Maintenance of body temperature**

2. **Protection**

3. **Perception of stimuli**

## **4. Excretion**

## **5. Synthesis of Vitamin D**

## **6. Immunity**

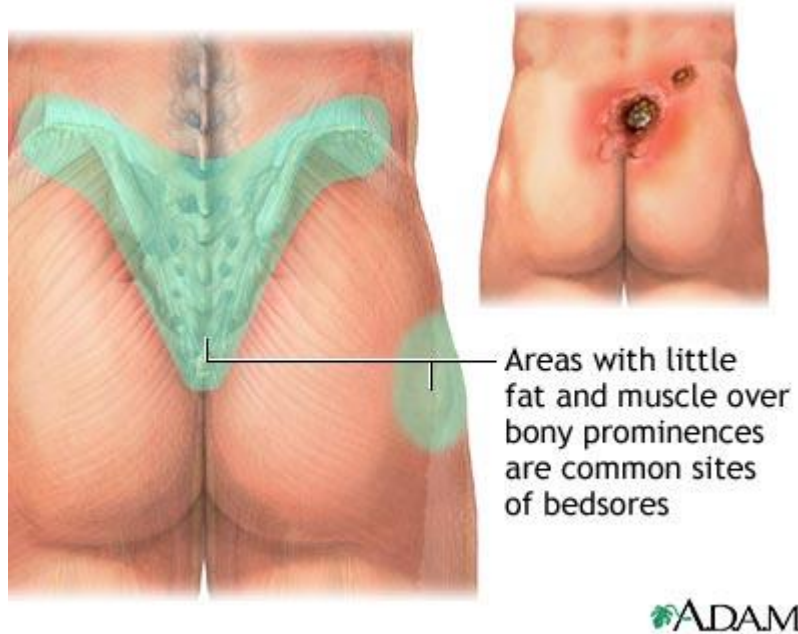
Adapted from [www.skinhealing.com](http://www.skinhealing.com)

# Pressure Sores



**A pressure sore (bed sore) is an injury to the skin and underlying tissue usually caused by unrelieved pressure.**

Information gained from [www.peacehealth.org](http://www.peacehealth.org)



Images taken from [www.nlm.nih.gov/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/)

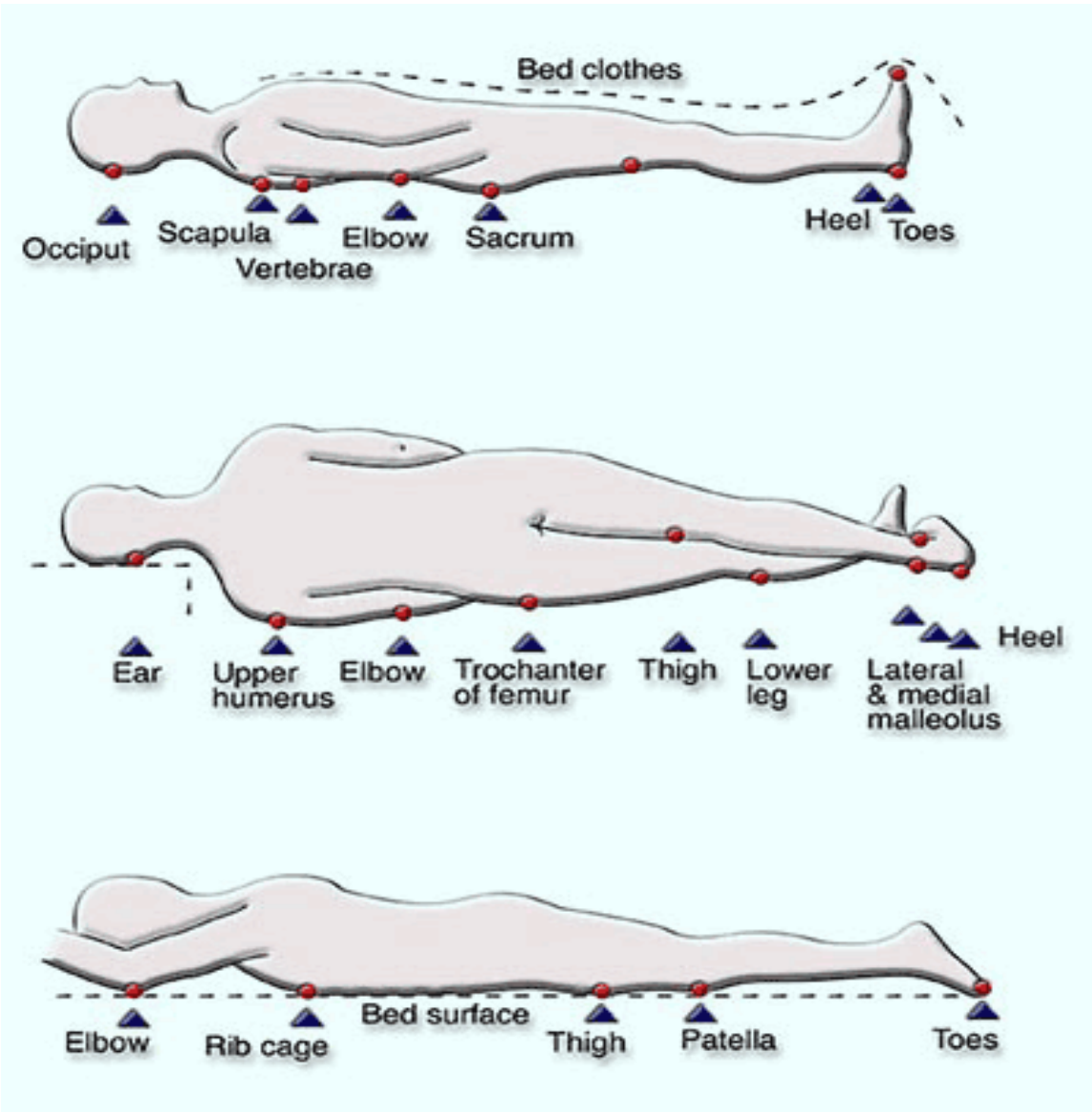


Image gained from [www.peacehealth.org](http://www.peacehealth.org)

What causes a pressure sore

?

# Examples of how pressures sores develop:

## Pressure

- unrelieved pressure
- incorrect mattress/ cushion
- shoes/ clothes
- objects eg. coins, keys
- Plaster of Paris

## Nutrition

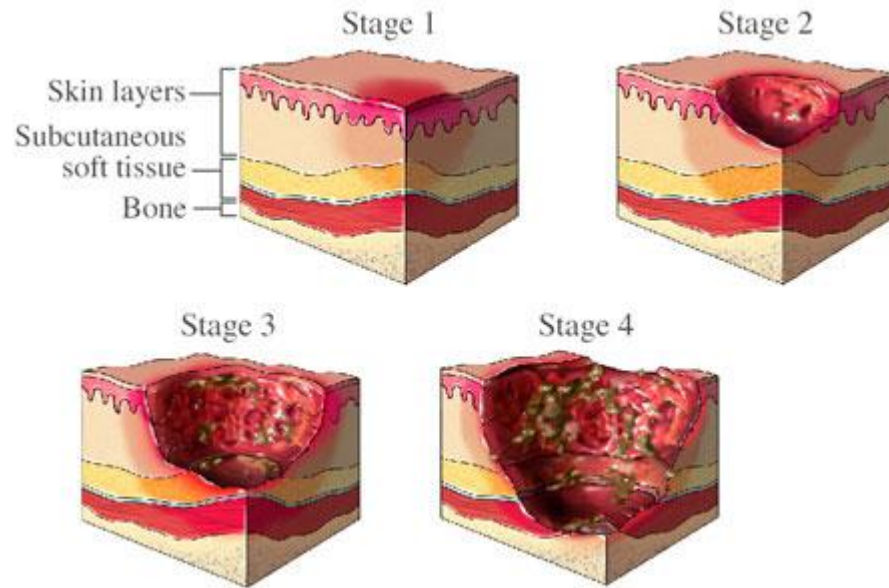
- weight gain
- weight loss

## Friction/ shearing

- transfers
- movement in bed

What are the stages  
and signs of a  
pressure sore  
?

# Pressure Ulcer Classification



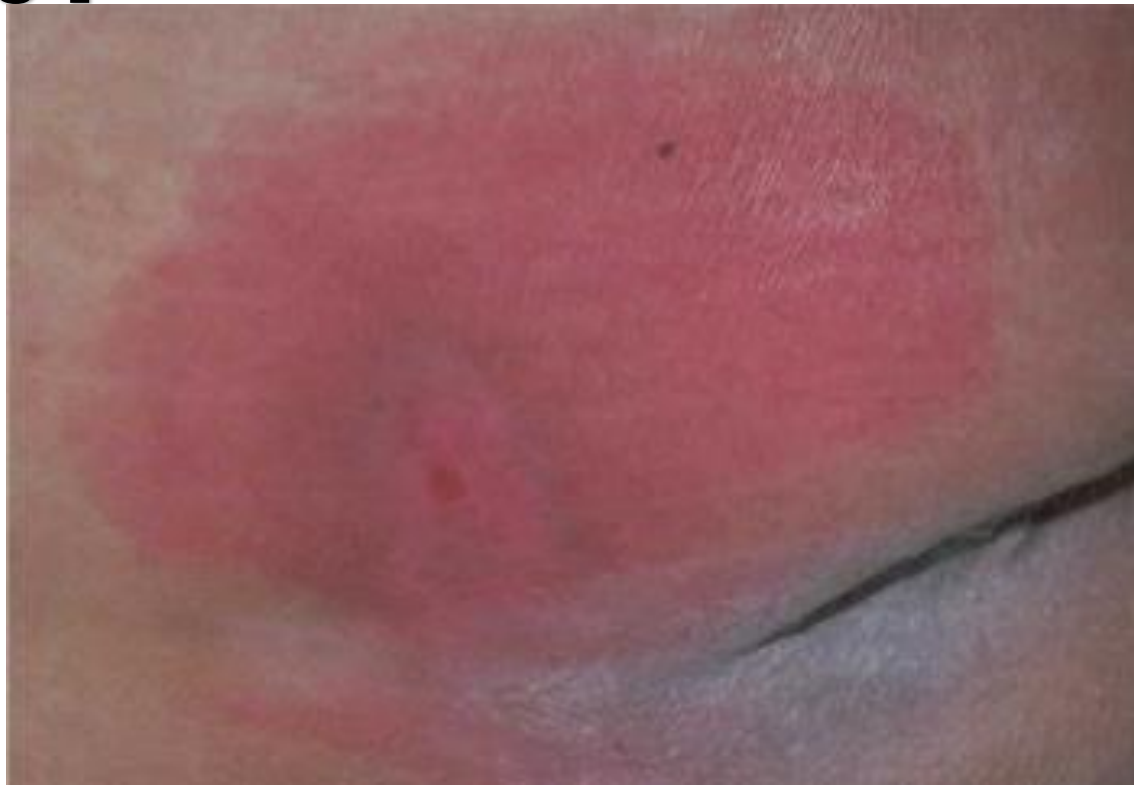
- 1. Skin becomes white or lighter in colour.**
- 2. Skin reddens, is warm and may be swollen when pressure is relieved.**
- 3. A blister develops over red area. Skin may have a bluish colour to it. The blister often opens.**
- 4. Centre of open sore turns black or brown and/or there is drainage.**

# Not a pressure ulcer

- **Blanching erythema**
- **Reddened area turns white/pale when pressed with finger tip then colour returns**
- **Should resolve when pressure is removed for significant time**
- **Moisture lesions**
- **Wet skin caused by faeces, urine, wound exudate, sweat...**
- **Excoriation, maceration**

# Pressure Ulcer Classification

- **Grade 1**



# Pressure Ulcer Classification

- **Grade 3**



# Pressure Ulcer Classification

- **Grade 4 (necrosis)**



**What do you do if a pressure sore develops**

**?**

- 1. Relieve pressure.***
- 2. Increase turn times.***
- 3. Encourage client to stay off the area.***
- 4. Contact district nursing team and office.***
- 5. Investigate cause***

# Skin Checking

**When to check?**

**Who is responsible?**

**What do you check when the patient is in their wheelchair?**

**What do you check in bed?**

**What do you check in cars?**

**What do you check in the bathroom?**

Main advice when dealing with pressure sores is to stay off the area until it is completely healed.

Questions

?