• Remind you to move and increase your activity. Or, they will change your position in bed or chair every 1 to 2 hours if you cannot move without help.
• Place pillows:
  - Under your calves to keep your heels off the bed.
  - Anywhere else they are needed to protect your body and prevent pressure ulcers.
• Keep the head of your bed as low as possible so that you do not slide down the bed.
• Help you get from the bed to the chair or toilet.
• Help to protect your skin from urine or stool. This is done with cream, pads, and disposable underwear.
• Help you get a well-balanced diet and enough fluids.
• Tell your doctor if they notice signs of skin problems.

Do You Have Any Questions or Concerns?
If you have any questions or problems, talk with your doctor or health care provider.

If your caregivers are not doing the things outlined in this handout, please ask them to!

Questions?
Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

A pressure ulcer is often called a “bed sore.” It forms when muscles and the soft tissues of your body are squeezed against an outside surface, such as a chair or bed.

This handout offers tips to help prevent pressure ulcers while you are in the hospital and when you are at home.
**Am I at risk for pressure ulcers?**

You are at risk if you:
- Don’t move.
- Stay in bed or a chair most of the time.
- Lose bladder or bowel control.
- Do not eat a balanced diet or drink enough fluids.
- Are overweight or underweight.
- Have thin, dry, or fragile skin.
- Need help getting from the bed to a chair or the toilet.
- Are confused or restless.
- Take steroids.
- Take medicines that make you sleepy.

**Where do pressure ulcers begin?**
Pressure ulcers can appear almost anywhere on your body. They are most likely to appear on these areas:
- Tailbone
- Hip bones
- Heels
- Ankles
- Elbows
- Spine
- Back of head
- Ears

**How can I keep my skin healthy?**

- Keep your skin clean, and dry off well after bathing.
- Use lotion if your skin is dry.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Be as active as possible.
- Practice good hygiene. Urine and stool on your skin can cause pressure ulcers to form quickly.
- Be careful not to drag yourself across the bed or chair. This can cause your skin to tear.

**What can I do to help prevent pressure ulcers?**

**Inspect your skin every day.**
- Look for red areas where pressure ulcers often form (tailbone, hips, heels, ankles, elbows, etc.).

**Increase your activity.**
- If possible, walk and exercise, or get physical therapy to increase movement and activity.

**Reduce pressure on your skin.**
- Change your position every 1 to 2 hours in bed, more often in a chair.
- Try to find comfortable positions that avoid putting pressure on red or sore spots.

**Hospital Care**
While you are in the hospital, your caregivers will help you prevent pressure ulcers. They will:
- Inspect your skin every day for redness or signs of problems.
- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- Put lotion on your skin to keep it soft.