

# Pressure Injury Inspection

*Many studies show that darker pigmented skin is more likely to have pressure injuries discovered at Stage 2 or above. Identifying early skin damage by careful inspection is critical to positive outcomes.*

*A 2018 study by Kayser and colleagues found that the most common anatomic locations for medical device-related PIs are the ears and feet. The devices most likely to cause PIs include nasal oxygen tubes, casts and splints and CPAP/BiPAP masks. It's critical to inspect these areas more frequently.*

## Keep Your Eyes on the Skin!

**You can make a difference in your daily routine to identify suspicious skin problems.**

Don't work with blinders on - inspect the skin with every visit!

- Med pass: Is the resident positioned greater than 30°? Check skin under O2 tubing; is there pain or itching? During 1 p.m. med pass, is resident at same position noted at 9 a.m.?
- Pain assessment and decreased mobility (i.e., right hip fracture; needs right heel floated.)
- ADL care: Look at exposed bony prominences (heels, spine, etc.) **every time**. Report pain or itching.

Don't forget the basics!

- No positioning devices on bony prominences or PIs
- Use a flashlight and mirror for hard-to-see areas
- Careful inspection of all pressure points, including under medical devices, to identify signs of pressure
- Assess for blanching
  - In darkly pigmented skin, blanching by finger pressure may be inadequate as the pigment prevents visualization of blanching. Consider a clear plastic med cup to press on the areas so you can see blanching through the plastic.
- Touch areas to assess for redness, heat or cold, firm or boggy; especially important for darkly pigmented skin
- Ask resident about skin. Is there pain, itching, etc.? All are signs of early skin damage.
- Report all skin changes immediately so appropriate treatment can be initiated (i.e., drainage sock over ankle.)
- Don't forget to educate the resident and family

**Do what you do best - take great care of your residents... they depend on you!**

## Simple Strategies for Skin Inspections