

Skin Protection

Week 8

Objective To focus your staff on the importance of the skin as the first line of defense in protecting the body from harm and to reinforce the staff's role in providing care that promotes skin integrity.

First Ask staff how many days it has been since their unit acquired a pressure injury?

- a. If zero, ask how many days in the past week have they been without an acquired pressure injury.
- b. Congratulate each successful day!
- c. Update your Pressure Free Zone tracking wipe-off board.

Review

- a. "The Barren Desert" ~ Need: dry peeling onions, white tube socks, lotion.
- b. The Pressure Points poster and each tip for pressure relief.

Ask

- a. Staff to identify a few residents at high-risk for skin breakdown and explain why.
- b. What can you do differently in your daily routine to protect your residents' skin?

Emphasize Skin is the body's first line of defense and ANY opening in the skin places the resident at risk for infection, further skin breakdown, pain and other complications.

Lesson Excellent skin care is critical for protecting residents' skin and reducing the risk of pressure injuries, skin tears and abrasions.

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Week 8: Educational Demonstration

The Barren Desert

Objective To visually see the effects of friction on the skin. Dry onion skin should tear and shed when inserted in and out of a long tube sock. Applying lotion should moisturize the onion skin, reduce friction and help prevent skin tears.

- a. Advise the participants to think of the onion as an elder's fragile skin, and the sock as his or her bed linen.
- b. Have dry onions available (Hint: Onions should be dry, and kept at room temperature for best skin shedding).
- c. Have a volunteer try to put a dry onion in and out of a long tube sock. Note what happens to the onion's skin. Turn the sock inside out so the group can see all of the onion's skin that has shed.
- d. Now apply lotion generously all over another dry onion. With a clean sock, repeat the process. Turn the sock inside out to show that little to no shedding occurred.
- e. Ask how applying lotion changes the results seen on the onion's skin (Hint: To reduce friction, have a volunteer roll the sock all the way down to the toes in order to reduce "sliding" the entire sock over the onion).
- f. Have paper towels available for participant to clean lotion from his/her hands.

Lesson The importance of moisturizer in the prevention of pressure injuries. When applying lotion, avoid vigorous massage over bony prominences or reddened areas.

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Week 8: Pressure Points

- Skin is the armor that protects the body from invasion!
 - Skin is the first line of defense that protects us from infections, fluid loss and temperature control
- Maintain healthy skin every day by using:
 - Moisturizers: lotions and creams with a.m. and p.m. care
 - Barrier creams: after each incontinent episode
 - Protective devices: skin sleeves, splints, dressings, etc.
- Ensure proper fit fitting clothing, shoes, socks, briefs, etc.
- Use specialty devices that reduce pressure in wheelchairs, recliners and bed
- What you can do:
 - Daily skin checks and report suspicious findings
 - Repositioning using pressure reducing devices...lift, do not drag
 - Monitor intake of food and fluids
 - Moisturize and use barrier creams
 - Report changes in resident condition



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