

# Pressure Injury/ Ulcer

*Pressure injuries occur as a result of intense and/or prolonged pressure or pressure in combination with shear.*

*The tolerance of soft tissue for pressure and shear may also be affected by microclimate, nutrition, perfusion, comorbidities, and condition of the soft tissue (NPIAP, 2019).*

## Wound Identification – First Step in Proper Treatment

*It is imperative to determine the etiology of all wounds and lesions, as this will determine and direct the proper treatment and management of the wound.*

### Wound Types:

- **Vascular insufficiency:**
  - **Venous:** most commonly occur proximal to the medial or lateral malleolus, above the inner or outer ankle, or on the lower calf area of the leg.
  - **Arterial:** commonly occur on the tips and tops of the toes, tops of the foot, or distal to the medial malleolus.
  - **Mixed or combination of both types of insufficiencies.**
- **Diabetic Foot Ulcers:** Ulcers caused by the neuropathic and small blood vessel complications of diabetes. Most commonly occur on the plantar surface of the foot, on load-bearing areas such as the ball of the foot.
- **Moisture-associated skin damage:** Superficial skin damage caused by sustained exposure to moisture such as incontinence, wound exudate or perspiration.
- **Skin tear:** A result of shearing, friction or trauma to the skin that causes a separation of the skin layers.

### Common Locations of Pressure Injuries

- **Over bony prominences**
- **Tissues beneath or surrounding devices:**
  - **Medical Devices/Equipment:** Oxygen tubing, feeding tubes, catheters, cast, splints, compression hose/devices, etc.
  - **Non-Medical Devices:** Shoes, glasses, hearing aids, earrings and other jewelry, piercings, etc.

# Simple Strategies for Wound Identification and First Step in Proper Treatment