



Elderly Skin Care: Tips for Taking Care of Aging Skin and Avoiding Disease



The Structure of Skin

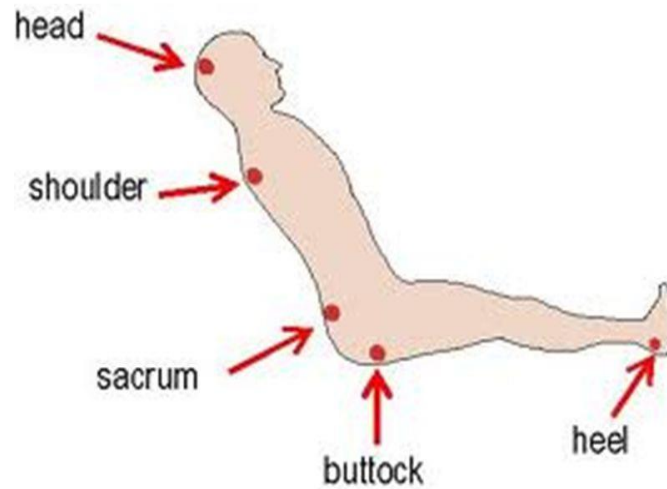
- The different layers, nerves and glands of the skin are known as the structure of the skin. Our skin is essential, it is the largest organ of the human body.
- There are three layers of the skin
 1. Epidermis- as thick as a sheet of paper, always flaking off and being renewed.
 2. Dermis- contains blood vessels, nerve endings and connective tissue (collagen & elastin help skin stretch). This is the second layer of skin and this layer degenerates in our elders.
 3. Subcutaneous tissue- is made up of connective tissue, sweat glands, more blood vessels and cells that store fat. This layer helps protect the body from blows and other injuries and helps it hold in body heat.

What Are the Risks to Skin

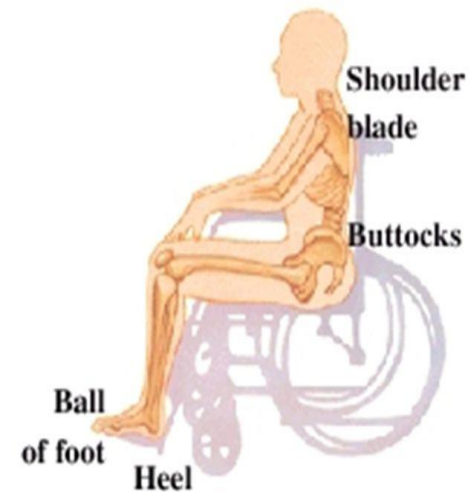
- Elderly skin changes – gets dryer, fat layer thins out that protects underlying structures
- Moisture damages skin
- Urine/Feces erodes skin (Incontinence)
- Pressure decreases blood flow and tissue dies.

Common Pressure Points

Pressure Points

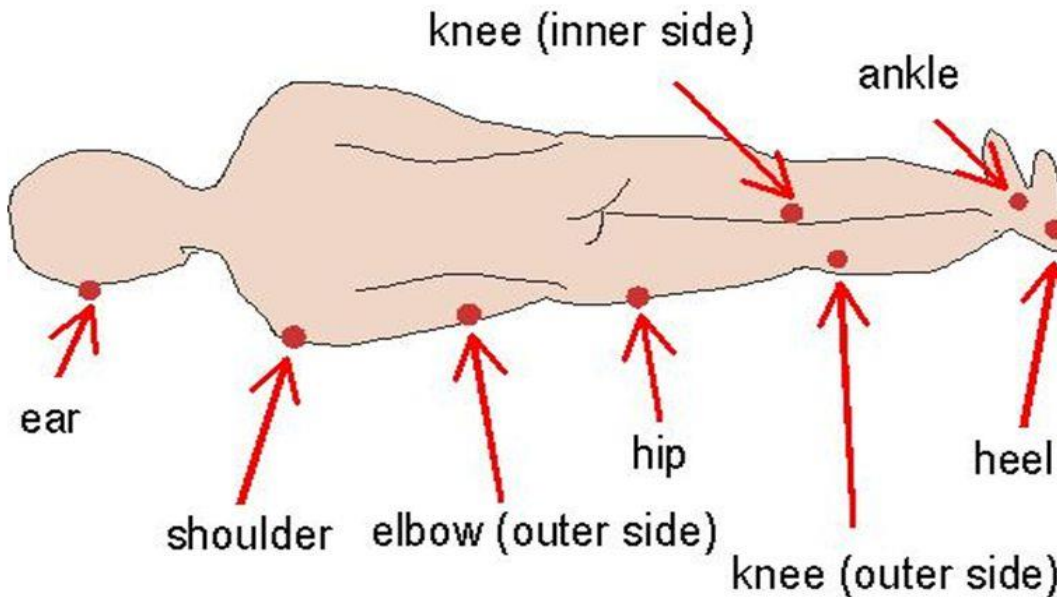


Pressure Points



Pressure Points (cont.)

Pressure Points



Basic Wound Assessment

- Pressure ulcer documentation should be completed at each visit with member in HCBS and SNF placement.
- Here are some documentation points that should be assessed on page 2 of the Review Assessment Form.
 1. Location
 2. Size
 3. Dressing/s
 4. Pressure reducing/relieving support surfaces or DME being used for treatment.

Skin Care Interventions

- Properly position and frequently turn patient off of pressure points. Use pillows, wedges.
- Use pressure relieving devices, as needed for example loss air loss mattress, pressure reduction overlay mattress and/or egg crate mattresses.
- Protect fragile skin w/ protective dressings or protective materials
- Keep skin clean, dry and moisturized
- Clean skin with non-toxic cleaners
- Protect skin exposed to incontinence w/skin protective barriers and creams

Pressure Relief



Skin Tear Protection



Summary – WE ARE ESSENTIAL

- Caregivers, family and CMs are part of the member's plan of care.
- We are all essential in identifying early pressure ulcer development.
- We can help avoid progression of skin damage.
- We can be the "eyes" for the doctor and warn them of early changes to skin integrity.