

HEALTHY OUTCOMES



Give Thanks

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Stop Pressure Injuries!

*Increase awareness
about pressure
injury prevention*

Pressure injuries can develop quickly, even in healthy skin.

Caregivers have a lot to worry about these days as everyone scrambles to prevent and treat COVID-19. One thing that should stay on top of their list though is maintaining skin health and **preventing pressure injuries**. Pressure injuries — previously called bed sores, pressure ulcers and decubitus ulcers — develop when pressure interrupts blood supply causing damage to the skin. Pressure injuries can develop in as short as 30 minutes if there is high pressure in a small area, even in healthy skin.

Pressure injuries are a serious problem that can cause pain and distress and can potentially be life threatening. An injured area with lack of blood supply can turn red, painful and then turn purple. If left untreated, the skin can break open. Once the skin breaks, there is an opening that could allow bacteria to enter and cause an infection. Pressure injuries are staged (described) to indicate the extent of tissue damage ranging from mild reddening of the skin to damage that extends into the muscle and bone. Without treatment, pressure injuries can lead to serious complications. Complications can include an infection of the skin and the soft tissues underneath (cellulitis), an infection of the bone (osteomyelitis) or blood (sepsis).

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The HCQU works with intellectual disabilities and behavioral health programs in Central PA to provide health care management services for adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities or Autism. Our goal is that all people living in PA, regardless of ability, receive the finest community services available – assuring that they are as healthy as possible and can fully participate in community life. The HCQU works to enhance access to community physical and mental health care through **FREE** education, public health outreach, advocacy and empowerment as well as to improve health care outcomes. Serving the following counties: Blair, Centre, Columbia/Montour/Snyder/Union, Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata, Lycoming/Clinton, Northumberland and Schuylkill.

The information offered in this newsletter is to increase your awareness of health-related situations. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. If you believe you or someone you support has a condition, please seek the advice of a physician.

Stop Pressure Injuries...

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There are three main risk factors to developing a pressure injury: immobility, increased pressure on a specific area of skin, and an interruption of the blood flow to the skin. Interrupted blood flow and damage to the skin can occur from the pressure of not changing positions often, lack of supporting the body, and rubbing and sliding. Skin injuries occur most often where skin covers bony areas of the body (like your heels, ankles, hips, back, elbows, ears, head, and behind the knees) or a medical device (i.e. catheter or oxygen tubing). Certain populations of individuals are at high risk for developing pressure injuries. The elderly, those who have medical conditions (spinal cord injuries and neurological disorders) that limit their ability to change positions often and anyone that spends an increase time in a bed or chair are considered at risk individuals. Being mindful of vulnerable individuals is part of prevention as is understanding how pressure injuries occur, identify risk factors and maintaining skin health.

Pressure injuries are preventable and treatable. Skin breakdown starts with slight changes but can progress very quickly. Early detection and prompt intervention can stop or delay the development of painful open wounds. The first signs of pressure injuries appear when the skin is still intact. Frequent repositioning, consistent skin care and close skin inspections are crucial.

To learn more about the prevention, staging and treatment of pressure injuries, visit:

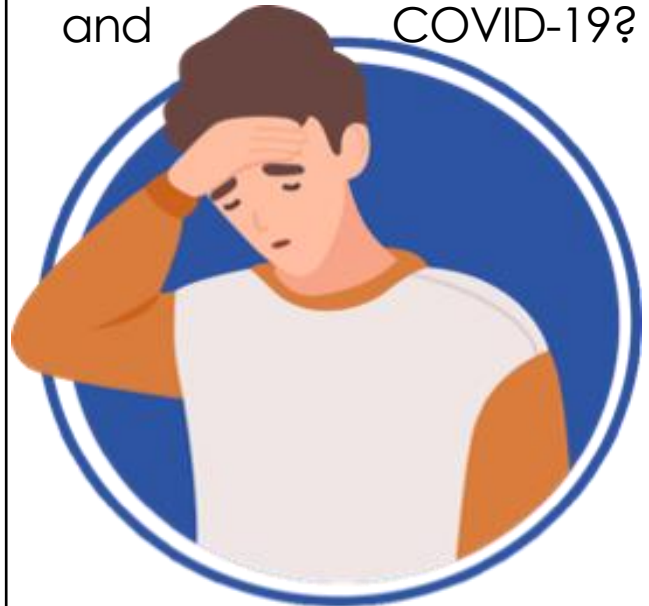
- National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel online at www.npiap.com
- NPIAP COVID-19 Related Resources for Pressure Injury Prevention can also be found at www.npiap.com
- Pressure Ulcers (Pressure Injuries): <https://www.sepsis.org/sepsisand/pressure-ulcers-pressure-injuries/>

The HCQU is available upon request to provide live virtual training on Skin Integrity and Pressure Injury Prevention as well as Fatal Four topics.

Take an online course, **Skin Health and Pressure Injuries**, developed by the Geisinger Central PA HCQU:

<https://education.geisinger.org/hcqu/SkinHealthPressureInjuries/index.html> ■

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?



Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses.

There are some key differences between flu and COVID-19. COVID-19 seems to spread more easily than flu and causes more serious illnesses in some people. It can also take longer before people show symptoms and people can be contagious for longer. Another important difference is there is a vaccine to protect against flu. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.












Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis. Flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, but there are some key differences between the two.

While more is learned every day, there is still a lot that is unknown about COVID-19 and the virus that causes it. To find out more about Influenza vs COVID-19, visit the CDC page at: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>

Sort out your symptoms. See the chart on the next page. ■

COVID-19? Cold? Flu? Seasonal Allergies?

SORT OUT YOUR SYMPTOMS

Sorting Out Symptoms				
Symptoms	Coronavirus* (COVID-19)	Cold	Flu	Seasonal Allergies
 Length of Symptoms	7-25 days (Symptoms range from mild to severe)	7-14 days (Gradual onset of symptoms)	7-14 days (Abrupt onset of symptoms)	Several weeks (Abrupt onset of symptoms)
 Cough	Common (Usually dry)	Common (Mild)	Common (Usually dry)	Rare (Usually dry unless it triggers asthma)
 Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No**	No**	No**
 Sneezing	No	Common	No	Common
 Runny or stuffy nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes	Common
 Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes	Sometimes (Usually mild)
 Fever	Common	Short fever period	Common	No
 Feeling tired	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 Headaches	Sometimes	Rare	Common	Sometimes (Related to sinus pain)
 Body aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common	No
 Diarrhea	Rare	No	Sometimes for children	No

*Information is still evolving. **Allergies, colds and flus can all trigger asthma, which can lead to shortness of breath. COVID-19 is the only one associated with shortness of breath on its own.
Sources: Asthma and Allergy foundation of America, World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



24/7 Warm Line Created

The Department of Human Services (DHS) announced the launch of a statewide Support and Referral Helpline staffed by skilled and compassionate staff who will be available 24/7 to assist Pennsylvanians struggling with anxiety and other challenging emotions due to the COVID-19 emergency and refer them to community-based resources that can further help to meet individual needs.

The toll-free, round-the-clock support line is officially operational. The number to call is 1-855-631-5600.

To create and staff the support line, DHS has partnered with the Center for Community Resources (CCR), an experienced regional crisis and call center provider based in Butler County and licensed to provide crisis services.

CCR staff are trained to be accessible, culturally competent, and skilled at assisting individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, co-occurring disorders and other special needs. Staff use the principles of trauma-informed care to listen, assess needs, triage calls, and provide appropriate referral to community resources to children, teens, adults and special populations.

CCR will collaborate with individuals, families, police, emergency medical teams, hospitals, schools, and human service providers on the local level to provide quality care to their community members.

Many other resources also remain available to Pennsylvanians in need of support, including:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text “PA” to 741-741
- Veteran Crisis Line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Get Help Now Hotline (for substance use disorders): 1-800-662-4357
- Pennsylvania Sexual Assault Helpline – 1-888-772-7227
- National Domestic Violence Helpline – 1-800-799-7233 ■



Choking is a Medical Emergency!

All caregivers should follow First Aid/CPR training instructions for an individual who is choking. Call 911 at the appropriate time and not delay the call by seeking supervisory approval.

Please review the 2018 PA ODP Health Alert *Choking: A Medical Emergency* for outlined actions to take for an individual choking:

https://www.pchc.org/images/PDFs/Advocacy/ODP/Alerts/2018/Reissue_Health_Alert-Choking_A_Medical_Emergency_081418.pdf

Signs of an Individual Choking

- Anxious or agitated state
- Reddened face
- Difficulty breathing
- Noisy breathing
- Severe coughing or gagging
- Hands at throat
- Not able to talk
- Not able to breathe
- Skin turning gray or blue
- Loss of consciousness

Remember, a single choking event may be a warning sign for future choking events. The HCQU is available upon request to do trainings about Choking. ■

From the HCQU to You!

Whether you are planning a ‘socially distanced’ Thanksgiving in person or through a screen, we want to take the time to express our gratitude for the countless adjustments that have been made in order to provide services during a chaotic and uncertain nine months. May you all take the time to celebrate your accomplishments and be proud of the top notch care you provide.



UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

Test your knowledge and see how many of primary and contributing risk factors for pressure injuries you can unscramble:

RERPUSES _____

IFRICNOT _____

HRAES _____

MYBLIIMTIO _____

EAG _____

NNNCIECTONIE _____

OROP RITTUNNOI _____

IAYHTDOENRD _____

ROYUNHAEPT _____

TAMLEN SAUSTT _____

HCQU News:

NOTICE effective 10/15/2020

Due to the remote working status of the Central PA HCQU, all completed Referral Forms requesting training or technical assistance should be emailed to the appropriate HCQU nurse. *Please do not fax referrals.* There is no change to the Blair County referral process.



National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel (NPUAP) has changed its name to the National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel (NPIAP). The new name reflects the future direction of the organization and their commitment to adopt the internationally preferred term, pressure injury, in place of pressure ulcer. The new NPIAP contemporary logo represents the patient will always be at the center (green core) of what they do. The sunrays emanating from the core represent NPIAP's work in reaching out to improve outcomes for patients with education, research and public policy. ■

ANSWERS TO WORD SCRAMBLE:

Pressure, friction, shear, immobility, age, incontinence, poor nutrition, dehydration, neuropathy, mental status


Cooking

Corner

Cinnamon Baked Apples

These baked apples taste simply great on a cold winter evening or any other evening. Plus, the house smells just divine while cooking them.

- 1 tsp butter
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 3 tsp vanilla sugar
- 3 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 6 large apples, peeled, cored, sliced
- 3 ½ tbsp water



Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a large baking dish with the butter. Mix brown sugar, vanilla sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a small bowl. Layer about 1/3 of the apples in prepared baking dish; sprinkle with 1/3 of the sugar mixture. Repeat layers twice more. Bake in preheated oven for 30 minutes. Pour water over apples and continue baking until tender, about 15 minutes more.

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