



**This is a guide only and does not
replace clinical judgment**

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Skin Integrity

Information for persons living with dementia,
family and carers



Skin Care

Functions of the skin include:

- protection
- providing a barrier to infection
- sensation or feeling
- temperature control
- production of Vitamin D
- elimination of waste (e.g. sweating)

Risk factors for skin problems:

- frequent falls
- changes in cognition
- reduced or increased mobility
- poor nutrition
- sensory changes or impairment
- impaired communication
- delirium or sudden postoperative changes in cognition



How carers can help

- use simple, clear communication
- ensure a well-lit, safe environment
- use safe transfer techniques
- consider pressure-relieving mattresses or chair cushions if movement is impaired
- be aware of potential triggers for agitation (e.g. receiving care from unfamiliar people)
- share information about likes and dislikes with everyone involved in their care

Persons living with dementia are at higher risk of loss of skin integrity, i.e., wounds such as skin tears or pressure ulcers

Tips on caring for your skin

Do

- ✓ Eat a nutritious diet
- ✓ Change position frequently
- ✓ Check feet and footwear regularly if walking frequently (consider visiting a podiatrist)
- ✓ Moisturise skin twice daily
- ✓ Use barrier creams to protect skin from excess moisture

Don't

- ✗ Use soap. Try pH balanced liquid body wash or cleansers instead
- ✗ Rub the skin over bony areas, e.g. hips
- ✗ Use tapes or adhesives on skin