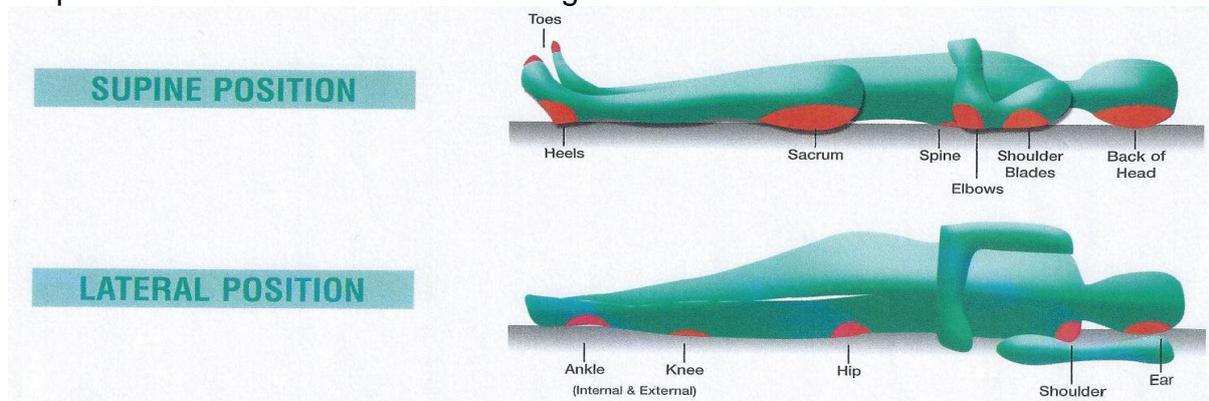


## Maintaining skin health when lying down

- The most common sites for pressure risk when lying down are the bony prominences as indicated in the diagram below.



- Look at the person in their chosen lying position and check that the full length of their body is in contact with the mattress, with all bony prominences supported. Pillows or support cushions may be used to achieve this. If the person is in a semi recumbent position be aware that this position puts more pressure on sacrum and heels as the person will tend to slide down the bed.
- Make sure the bedding and night clothes are smooth; avoid objects, creases or seams in the bed that might cause direct pressure when lying down.
- Check bed covers for pressure on toes and consider bed cradle.
- Make sure the skin is kept dry and clean.
- Make sure the person can turn and change position regularly in bed to avoid on-going pressure on the same area of skin. If the person can't turn independently consider equipment eg bed grab rails, in situ slide sheets, bed ladder, pillow lift or mattress variator or stand turners (see [www.devon.gov.uk/ces-catalogue](http://www.devon.gov.uk/ces-catalogue)) Ensure position changes in bed do not cause dragging movements as this will lead to pressure damage.
- If independent movement in bed is not possible ensure carers have a regular turning schedule or equipment is issued to facilitate this.
- Transfers out of bed should be encouraged and facilitated with moving and handling techniques and/or equipment : eg bed grab rails, in situ slide sheets, bed ladder, pillow lift or mattress variator or stand turners ( see CES catalogue)
- If moving and handling techniques and/or equipment do not meet the need, liaise with the Multi disciplinary team for further advice or joint visit.
- When using a profiling bed or mattress variator, reduce the risk of sacrum and heel pressure damage by lifting the knee section before raising the pillow end of the bed, this will reduce sliding down the bed. In situ slide sheets can help reduce the risk of friction when using powered bed equipment.
- If re positioning using a profiling bed or powered bed equipment ensure there is equal weight distribution through the full length of the person's body with no bony prominences unsupported.
- If using powered bed equipment, check if the person can manage the controls themselves to adjust their own position
- Consider if a pressure relieving mattress is required. Be aware that a dynamic mattress will affect the person's ability to move or transfer independently.