



OSU COMPREHENSIVE WOUND CENTER

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ELIMINATING FOOT PRESSURE

Wounds that are located on the foot over bony prominences are usually caused by prolonged pressure to the area. Common locations for this to occur are the bottom of the foot at the ball of the foot, tips of the toes, at the first (big) or fifth (baby) toes along the inner or outer edge of the foot, or the heel. This pressure may also be complicated by poor sensation in the feet, a condition known as neuropathy, which often affects people with diabetes, and prevents them from sensing the uncomfortable nature of this prolonged pressure.

Prolonged pressure may exist in various forms. A poorly fitted shoe or extended periods of time spent with an area of the foot pressing against an object such as a brace or mattress can create enough pressure to cause a wound. Once the wound has formed, it is critical to remove this pressure in order for the healing process to occur.

The best way to stimulate healing is to completely remove all pressure from the wound. This involves choosing a method of getting around which does not require you to bear weight on your feet. It is quite safe to say that continuing to walk on a wound, which is located on the foot, will almost guarantee its failure to heal.

Successful pressure elimination depends upon a commitment from you to limit daily activities, which require standing and walking. This means staying off your feet as much as possible with your feet positioned so that no pressure is applied over the wound. When getting up or going out is essential, it is important to use the aides recommended by you physician and nurse to prevent weight bearing. These aides may consist of a pair of crutches or a wheelchair.