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| **9. Overall Health**There are huge things you can do that can help. * Pain control is critically important. This ranges from Tylenol to medical marijuana.
* Focus on mental health, either through therapy or medication, as depression is very common.
* Tobacco cessation through nicotine patches or talking to a healthcare provider.
* Management of diabetes, cholesterol or electrolyte imbalance.
* Management of heart problems, which can cause edema (a condition of skin swelling).
* It is essential that your wound care provider works hand in hand with your medical primary team.

**10. Physical Therapy** Physical therapy is essential to increase muscle strength, help patient ambulate (walk), and prevent contractures, which is when your joints fold on themselves. For many patients it will be necessary to send a physical therapist to their home; in other cases, the patient can go to a center. **11. Occupational Therapy**There are special devices that can help the patient go the bathroom and even sometimes doing routine activities (like putting on socks or dressing oneself). The occupational therapist will work closely with your physical therapist to coordinate your care. **12. Speech**Ask about a speech pathologist who can come to your home to help you speak or communicate. This is a common need for patients after a stroke or having a tracheostomy.  **12. Surgery**In some cases, you will need a procedure to clear the dead skin from the wound. At RWJBarnabas, we are also experts in the field of regenerative medicine, where we use human cells or special proteins called growth factors to help you heal. We also work with a group of gifted plastic surgeons to help close your wound.  |  | **Prevention** **and** **Treatment of Bedsores**Frank Dos Santos, DO, MPH, FACEP*Chief Medical Officer,* *Clara Maas Medical Center*Whether you are reading this in a hospital, a rehabilitation facility, nursing home, or at home, this is vital information to care for yourself or your loved one. |

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| This pamphlet is for you and/or your loved one because you are either at high risk for skin breakdown or already have a bedsore. Before you leave the hospital, (or if you are already at home) arrange with your wound care provider to send a nurse to you. We can also have a social worker available who can help you better understand your options for each of the following preventative and treatment measures. If you have questions or would like to arrange for a telemedicine or in person consultation, call 973-926-8230. You can also contact a clinician on call at 973-854-4335 for an emergency. All of the following items should be discussed with the wound care physician or relevant healthcare provider.Further specifics, as well as the reference material for this brochure, can be found on our website ([www.njwoundhealing.org](http://www.njwoundhealing.org)). **Who is at risk?** Any person who is bedbound and is not moving like they used to, either because of age, underlying medical conditions, accident, or other injury. This brochure is designed for all those who are taking care of those who are disabled or elderly, as well as the patients themselves. ***How do I know what resources are available to help?*** The information provided here should be coordinated with the healthcare provider that is caring for your skin. This may be a nurse practitioner in the home, your primary care physician, or a wound center physician and their nurses. It is best to discuss the resources available to you with a social worker, who will have your care providers instructions. **These are the Eleven Steps to Prevent and Care for Pressure Ulcers…** | **1.** **Frequent turning and repositioning**. If you are in a wheelchair or bedbound, it is important to frequently reposition yourself. There are special wedges, cushions and sheets available to help you with this process. If your provider orders a special mattress or cushion, it is essential to utilize this. **2. Caregiver support**: you may be eligible for a nurse, an aide, or a support person who can provide help. **3**. **Nutrition.** It is important to eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water to help your skin stay strong. * Vitamin C and D, zinc, iron, and multivitamins can be very helpful and we strongly advocate for them.
* Nutritional supplements in the form of protein shakes are tailor made for your specific needs. Let your provider know if you have kidney problems, diabetes, pre-diabetes, or liver problems.
* For patients who cannot take food orally, a feeding tube might be recommended.
* Consultation with a nutritionist or a metabolic medicine physician is highly recommended. A speech therapist may be needed to determine if you can swallow safely.

**4. Managing Your Pee**Many times, pee happens around the skin, the buttocks, and genital area. The most important thing is to keep this area free of urine by using zinc oxide barrier cream 20% as frequently as needed (at least twice a day). In addition, special absorbent diapers can be ordered by your home care nurse. For some patients, a catheter or a drip collector might be helpful; other alternatives include suprapubic catheter or bladder sling surgery. If incontinence is a severe problem for the patient, please discuss these options with your wound care provider.  | **5. Managing Your Poop**Options for fecal incontinence include: a) Probiotics, particularly if you are on antibiotics; b) Sometimes what you eat can be altered to promote regular bowel movements; c) In some cases a colostomy, which is a surgical procedure, is necessary. **6. Keep Skin Clean and Dry**Clean skin is happy skin! Make sure to keep your skin clean and dry. We recommend bathing or showering any time there is stool or urine on your skin. At the very least, there are special wound cleansers to be used. **7. Sheets**Although most sheets are fine, there are options that can relieve pressure and reduce moisture. * Pressure-Relieving Sheets: Sheets made from special materials that help distribute pressure evenly across the surface.
* Moisture-Wicking Sheets: Sheets made from materials that draw moisture away from the skin keeping it dry.
* Low-Friction Sheets: Sheets with a smooth surface that reduce friction and shear forces on the skin.
* Breathable Sheets: Materials that allow air circulation to prevent heat and moisture buildup. Silk-like fabric sheets are typically used as they do not feel stiff or have a rough loose weave.
* Silk Satin Sheets can be used to reduce friction and improve skin quality.
* Disposable Under pads can be laid under you while you are sleeping to absorb urine or other bodily fluids.

**8. Wound Treatments** * Santyl, or Collagenase Santyl Ointment (CSO), is a special medicine that doctors use to help heal wounds.
* Other common medications that are prescribed are Iodosorb, Silvadene, Medihoney, Aquacell AG.
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