Assessing the Patient Who is at Risk for Heel Pressure Ulcer

Complete Braden Scale

Heel Off-loading Algorithm

Routine Pressure Ulcer Prevention Strategies:
- Encourage adequate repositioning q2 hours
- Inspect skin for areas of pressure per shift
- Apply alcohol free moisturizer to skin if skin is dry and cracking
- Encourage adequate fluid intake
- Promote good nutrition

To prevent heel ulcers:
- Elevate/float heels off the surface of the bed
- Use pillows lengthwise along legs to distribute weight and knees slightly flexed to avoid hyperextension
- Hyperextension may cause obstruction of the popliteal vein, which could predispose a patient to deep vein thrombosis
- Heel elevation in bed is especially important for patients with diabetes mellitus, peripheral vascular disease, neuropathy and during and following surgery
- Do not use rolled blankets, towels, or pillow cases, incontinent pads or IV bags to elevate heels

Pressure Ulcer Prevention Spring 2016

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