

**Prevention of pressure injuries due to face masks during COVID-19 pandemia**

Today there is an increased concern among healthcare workers in intensive care units of COVID-19 pandemic regarding skin lesions occurring during application and wearing of facemasks and other protective medical devices to prevent virus contamination.

The majority of face skin lesions occur over bony prominences and in particular on the forehead, the nasal bridge and the zygomatic arch.

There are few easy steps to prevent those lesions as follow:

- Apply a transparent spray barrier film over the area at risk and before wearing the medical devices. The film will last for up to 6 hours protecting and hydrating the skin, also not interfering with the seal of medical device with the skin
- Alternatively use a thin hydrocolloid dressing or a soft silicone membrane dressing over the area at risk, by cutting little strips of dressing. Those dressing have a mild adhesiveness which will avoid any further irritation

If skin lesions are already present like mild or persistent erythema-non blanchable redness (Grade 1 pressure injury) or skin erosion (Grade 2 pressure injury) apply topical treatment as follow:

- For Grade 1 lesions apply moisturizers with direct action on erythema, such as topical products containing purified omental lipids, twice daily morning and night
- For Grade 2 lesions apply a thin hydrocolloid over the injured area and leave it in place for 48 hours

**Reference**

Bishopp A, Oakes A, Antoine-Pitterson P, Chakraborty B, Comer D, Mukherjee R. The Preventative Effect of Hydrocolloid Dressings on Nasal Bridge Pressure Ulceration in Acute Non-Invasive Ventilation. *Ulster Med J.* 2019; 88(1):17-20.

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