

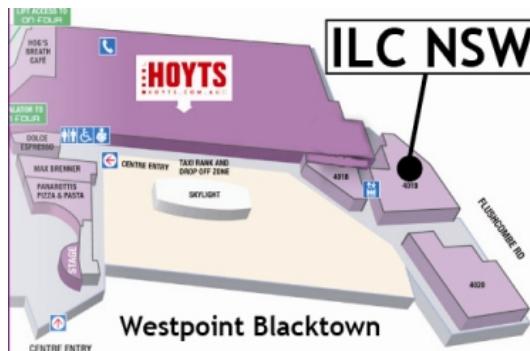
## Guidelines to assist you when

# Choosing a Bed and Mattress



Independent Living Centre NSW

Independent Living Centre NSW  
Shop 4019, Level 4  
Westpoint Shopping Centre  
17 Patrick Street  
Blacktown NSW 2148



Info-Line: 1300 452 679  
Reception: (02) 9912 5800  
Fax: (02) 8814 9656  
Email: [help@ilcnsw.asn.au](mailto:help@ilcnsw.asn.au)  
Web: [www.ilcnsw.asn.au](http://www.ilcnsw.asn.au)

### Supported by



Family &  
Community Services  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care



home and community care

A JOINT COMMONWEALTH AND STATE/TERRITORY PROGRAM  
PROVIDING FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE FOR AUSTRALIANS IN NEED

If you have difficulty getting in or out of bed or if you have red pressure areas on your skin, contact us for more options

## Mattress maintenance

- Regularly rotate or turn to reduce wear.
- Avoid sitting on the same area of the bed, especially when dressing.
- Vacuum regularly to reduce allergens.
- Replace mattress about every 10 years.

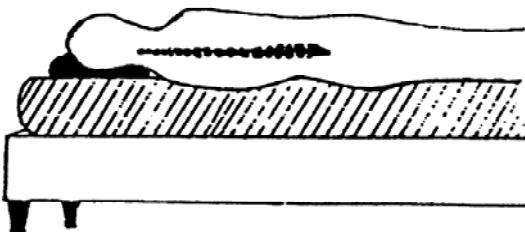
## Alternatives to buying a new bed or mattress

- If the problem is a soft base, make it firmer with wooden slats or board.
- If the mattress is not providing enough pressure relief, and red areas are appearing on the skin, consider a mattress overlay.
- A bed which is too low can be raised with special blocks.

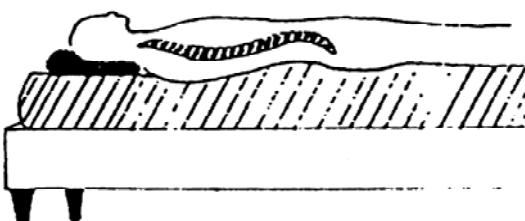
## The mattress must maintain your spine in its natural position

It should be reasonably firm to provide support and enable easy turning, but soft enough to be comfortable and cradle your body's natural curves. The bed base must be firm to provide good support for the mattress.

When lying on your side, your spine should be straight



When lying on your back, your spine should maintain its natural curves



Pain and discomfort can occur in the joints and muscles when the natural position of the spine is not maintained.

## Mattress types

### Innerspring

- More springs means better support
- "Pillow tops" flatten with use and may need replacing
- They are heavy to rotate or turn
- Electrically adjustable beds require specially designed inner spring mattresses

### Foam

- Comes in various densities of firmness for support
- Inexpensive and lightweight
- Flattens with use

### Memory foam

- Senses body weight and temperature, and moulds to the body
- Provides pressure relief
- Lightweight and inexpensive
- Can harden in cold temperatures
- Softness of foam may make it difficult to turn over in bed

### Latex

- Conforms to the body, re-distributing pressure
- Hypo-allergenic and circulates air
- They are heavy to rotate or turn
- Pure latex rubber is expensive

## Also check

### Size

You should have a space of at least 15cm around your body.

### Height

Can you get on and off easily? Is it a comfortable height for making the bed? If you use a wheelchair, is the bed the right height for getting on and off?

### Edges

They should be firm and easy to get off.

### Size of room

If possible, allow enough room around the bed for a wheelchair or hoist if needed.

### Trial

When choosing a new bed lie on the bed in your normal sleeping position. If the bed is for two, then try it together. Some manufacturers will offer an obligation-free trial period in your home.

### Consider customising

Some manufacturers will make customised beds and mattresses, for example, to increase the length or provide firmer sides.