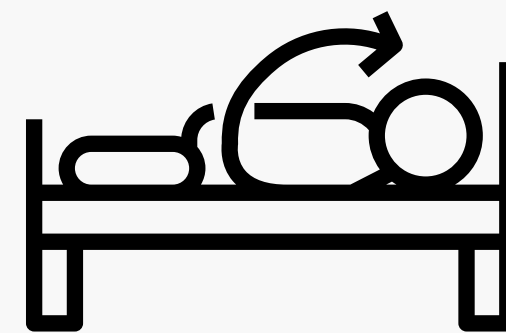


# Bedsores



## What is a Bedsore?

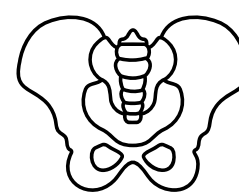
Bed sores (also known as pressure ulcers, decubitus ulcers) are wounds to the skin and underlying tissue resulting from prolonged pressure on the skin.

### Symptoms

- Unusual changes in skin color
- Unusual changes in skin texture
- Unusual changes in an area of skin temperature
- Tenderness
- Swelling
- Pus-like draining

### Common Bony Sites

- Back/Sides of the Head
- Shoulder Blades
- Back of the Arms/Legs
- Spine
- Lower Back
- Tailbone
- Buttocks
- Hips
- Behind the Knees
- Ankles



### Staging

- **Stage 1:** Changes in skin texture, temperature, or color without an open wound present
- **Stage 2:** Shallow wound present with a pink/red base
- **Stage 3:** Wound deepens into fatty layer
- **Stage 4:** Wound penetrates to bone

## What Causes Bedsores?

Bedsore occur when an area of skin is cut off from blood flow by pressure. Bedsore can begin to develop in just hours. Pressure, limited movement, friction, shear, traction, and moisture are all causes of bedsore.

## Risk Factors

Individuals with restricted mobility may experience difficulty changing positions to relieve pressure from common bedsore sites: individuals experiencing comatose state, vegetative state, paralysis, wheelchair usage, prosthetic device usage, injuries requiring casting or splinting. Persons with any medical condition affecting the flow of blood, the inability to control urination or defecation (incontinence), or lacking the ability to recognize and interpret touch (sensory perception) experience higher risk. Poor nutrition and poor hydration habits may also increase risk.

## Bedsore Prevention

Repositioning frequently to shift weight can help prevent prolonged pressure from cutting off blood flow (every 15 minutes while sitting, every 1-2 hours while in bed). If possible, incorporate movement and exercise into daily routine. Examine skin regularly, keep skin and surrounding fabrics clean and dry, and protect skin with a moisture barrier cream. Select equipment that aids in pressure relief such as specialty wheelchairs, mattresses, cushions, etc. Avoid donut cushions, skin-irritating clothing accessories such as buttons, wrinkles in bedding, and nicotine. Avoid shear by limiting the elevation of an adjustable bed (head 0-30 degrees). Eat a nutrient-dense diet and stay hydrated.

