

What Do You Mean By Bed Sores? Causes, Signs & Treatment

Bed Sores (Aka Pressure Sores)

Bed sores are also known as pressure ulcers, pressure sores, or decubitus ulcers, and are areas of damaged skin and tissue which develop from sustained pressure – usually from lying in a bed or sitting in a wheelchair – which cuts off circulation to parts of the body. Bed sores are completely preventable.

Essentially, when caregivers fail to take steps to prevent a patient from prolonged suffering pressure, bed sores develop. Without adequate blood flow, which would occur in the turning and moving of a patient, the affected tissue dies.

Causes Of Bed Sores

- Malnutrition
- Pressure
- Friction
- Shear
- Dehydration
- being unable to move around easily due to old age or illness
- other medical conditions, such as diabetes
- having a previous pressure ulcer
- moist skin - for example, due to sweating or incontinence
- Poor care in nursing homes

Signs Of Bed Sores

- Unusual changes in skin color or texture
- Swelling
- Pus-like draining
- An area of skin that feels cooler or warmer to the touch than other areas
- Tender areas

Common Sites Of Bed Sores

- Tailbone or buttocks
- Shoulder blades and spine
- Backs of arms and legs
- The hip, lower back or tailbone
- The back or sides of the head
- The heels, ankles and skin behind the knees

Stages Of Bed Sores

A bed sore is rated in stages depending on its devastation to the body. There are four stages which increase in severity.

- **Stage 1.** The area looks red and feels warm to the touch. With darker skin, the area may have a blue or purple tint. The person may also complain that it burns, hurts, or itches.
- **Stage 2.** The area looks more damaged and may have an open sore, scrape, or blister. The person complains of significant pain and the skin around the wound may be discolored.
- **Stage 3.** The area has a crater-like appearance due to damage below the skin's surface.
- **Stage 4.** The area is severely damaged and a large wound is present. Muscles, tendons, bones, and joints can be involved. Infection is a significant risk at this stage.

How Are Bedsores Diagnosed?

Healthcare providers diagnose bedsores by inspecting the skin of those at risk for them. They are staged according to their appearance.

Treatment Of Bed Sores

Treating bed sores is challenging which is why prevention is the best medicine. Open wounds are slow to close, and because skin and other tissues have already been damaged or destroyed, healing is never perfect.

- Removing pressure on the affected area
- Protecting the wound with medicated gauze or other special dressings
- Keeping the wound clean
- Ensuring good nutrition
- Removing the damaged, infected, or dead tissue (debridement)
- Transplanting healthy skin to the wound area (skin grafts)
- Negative pressure wound therapy
- Medicine (such as antibiotics to treat infections)

Can Bedsores Be Prevented?

- Bedsores can be prevented by inspecting the skin for areas of redness (the first sign of skin breakdown) every day with particular attention to bony areas. Other methods of preventing bedsores and preventing existing sores from getting worse include:
- Turning and repositioning every 2 hours
- Sitting upright and straight in a wheelchair, changing position every 15 minutes
- Providing soft padding in wheelchairs and beds to reduce pressure
- Providing good skin care by keeping the skin clean and dry
- Providing good nutrition because without enough calories, vitamins, minerals, fluids, and protein, bed sores can't heal, no matter how well you care for the sore



Contact York Law Firm

If your loved one has sustained a pressure sore as a result of [elder neglect](#), the attorneys at York Law Firm are available to help you fight against the system responsible for injuring your loved one. [Contact us](#) today for a free case evaluation.

Website: www.yorklawfirm.com

Email: info@yorklawcorp.com

Contact No.: 800-939-1832