



# Bedsores - Did you know?

- **What are they?** Bedsores are called by other names such as pressure sores, ulcers or decubitus ulcers.

They are caused by unrelieved pressure to the skin. Common areas of the body where they occur include hips, back, ankles and buttocks.

- **Are there different types of bedsores?** There is a staging process. There are four stages. Stage One is where the skin is not broken. Stage Two is where the skin is open and there is an ulcer which is shallow with a red/pink wound. Stage Three is where the ulcer is deeper and can affect the fat layers to the skin and looks like a crater. Stage Four, the most serious is when many layers of the skin are affected including muscle and bone.
- **What is the cost to the NHS of treating bedsores?** The most recent research paper was published in 2014 by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. They placed the cost, depending on the type of Bedsores at between £43 - £374 a day.
- **How are bedsores avoided?** Bedsores are avoidable provided patients who are elderly, or immobile are properly assessed and regularly turned and checked for the tell sign of pressure areas. The Waterlow Pressure Ulcer Risk Assessment Tool is the most used system in the UK. Reputable care establishments have properly trained staff and carry out risk assessments to ensure staff are trained to spot potential problems early. Bed sores can be treated with medication, therapies, surgeries and debridement.

If bedsores are untreated they can develop into an infection with associated problems. In 1986, 117 death certificates listed Bedsores as the cause of death.

- **Who is at risk?** People who have limited mobility and / or are elderly, disabled, incontinent and have other health issues are most at risk. Specifically, bedsores can be caused when you are in the health providing system by improper staffing and improper training.
- **Damages?** If you are to pursue a claim as against a health provider, NHS or a Care Home, the damages recoverable are unique to each case. Specifically it depends upon the extent of the pain and suffering, the amount of rehabilitation and treatment required and of course the extent to which the bedsores or sores have compromised the quality of your life.

**For further information please contact  
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