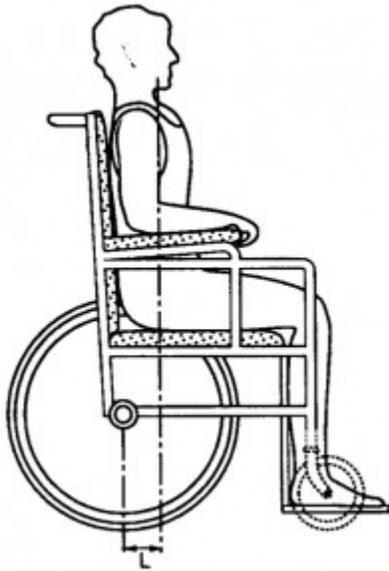


Bed Sore FAQs

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM A NURSING HOME LAWYER

Why are physically disabled patients at risk for developing bed sores?



Bed sores are common problem facing physically challenged patients in nursing homes and hospitals alike. The primary reason physically disabled patients are at risk for developing bed sores (similarly called: decubitus ulcers, pressure ulcers or pressure sores) is because they are reliant upon caretakers to take the necessary steps to prevent bed sores.

In particular, physically disabled patients must be [turned on regular basis](#) to avoid unrelieved pressure from developing. Similarly, caregivers must be diligent when caring for physically disabled patients who are [incontinent](#) to avoid protracted skin contact with urine and feces—known caustic agents that may speed skin breakdown.

In patients who are paralyzed due to a stroke or traumatic event, staff need to regularly check the patients entire body for the early signs of bed sores— discoloration of the skin.

According to the National Spinal Cord Injury Association:

- More than one-third of people living with spinal cord injuries living in the United States are battling a bed sore of some type
- Bed sores are responsible for causing the death of 8% of spinal cord patients
- When bed sore advance and the person develops sepsis, there is a 50% mortality rate

- Bed sores heal slower in patients with spinal cord injuries– frequently they require more than a one-year hospitalization

Caregivers for disabled patients should be aware that the individuals they are responsible for caring for are at heightened risk for developing bed sores. Consequently, they may wish to implement some of the following preventative measures:

- Use specialized beds and other medical equipment to minimize the direct pressure on particularly susceptible areas of the body such as the [heels](#), back, [buttocks](#) and head.
- Provide [proper nutrition](#) and supplements
- Get the person out of bed as often as feasible
- Keep a chart to help track different rotation positions
- Notify doctors immediately if the patients condition changes or bed sores develop