

Bed Sore FAQs

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM A NURSING HOME LAWYER

How does the use of the Braden Scale help in the prevention of bed sores?

The Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk is a universally accepted tool to help staff in nursing homes and hospitals identify individuals who may be at risk for developing bed sores (also called decubitus ulcers, pressure sores or pressures ulcers). The Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk evaluates each resident in the following areas: sensory perception, degree to which the skin is exposed to moisture, the individuals level of activity, the individuals ability to change positions, nutrition and the exposure to situations that can result in friction and shear to the skin.

A numerical score is assigned to category depending on the individuals needs and level of assistance. In general, the scores correlate the likelihood of development of bed sores and dictate what preventative tools should be implemented. The lower the individual scores on the Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk, the more likely the individual is to develop bed sores. A Braden Score of 12 or less is considered to be 'high risk' for development of bed sores.

The goal behind implementation of the Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk is that it can assist medical professionals with varied experience and judgment to consistently identify patients at risk for developing bed sores and to quantify the severity of risk. The Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk is completed on admission to a facility and should be updated quarterly to help provide the best care to a residents changing physical condition.

A completed Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk becomes part of the residents chart and can be used a reference for all care givers to address medical needs. In a busy nursing home or hospital setting, the Braden Scale serves as a reminder to busy nursing staff to attend to this aspect of patient assessment and care with the consistency necessary to influence outcomes. The Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Sore Risk also helps direct the attention of the nursing staff to six specific risk factors so that preventive care can be appropriately prescribed.