

Bed Sore FAQs

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM A NURSING HOME LAWYER

How do medical facilities assess healing bed sores?

In order to maximize the effectiveness of bed sore treatment, medical facilities need to monitor bed sores as they heal. Most medical facilities assess how well a bed sore (also called: decubitus ulcer, pressure ulcer or pressure sore) is healing based on the size of the wound and the physical characteristics. The size of the bed sore can be measured with a disposable ruler or with tracing paper. Increasingly, medical facilities are using technology such as ultrasound and computer guided imagery to assist in assessing bed sores during the healing process.

A physician generally determines how frequently a bed sore should be measured and re-assessed on a formal basis. Nonetheless, staff should note any rapid deterioration or unusual changes and bring the changes to the attention of a treating physician if warranted.

The healing time for a bed sore depends on the size and severity of the wound(s). For example, a [stage 1 bed sore](#) may heal within a few days while a [stage 4 bed sore](#) may take several months or more. Patients suffering from severe bed sores may require years of medical treatment.

Unfortunately, some bed sores may never heal— especially when the person has other illnesses or is elderly. There are no specific guidelines that can be used to predict whether an ulcer will be “non-healing.”