

Bed Sore FAQs

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM A NURSING HOME LAWYER

Can bed sores be fatal?

Yes. The reality is that the prognosis for most patients with bed sores is not good. Although few studies have been conducted regarding the overall mortality of patients with bed sores (also referred to as: decubitus ulcers, pressure ulcers or pressure sores), a study of patients with paraplegia determined that bed sores are a direct cause of death in 7 – 8% of all people.

Other studies have determined that more than 33% of patients hospitalized for bed sores (as a primary condition) will die during their stay. In cases where patients developed a bed sore in the hospital, only 50% will live more than twelve months.

In other groups of patients who have a serious illness accompanied by bed sores, the bed sores may result in an expedited decline in overall condition and death.

Sources:

Kenkel JM. Pressure Sores (overview). In: Kenkel JM. Selected Read Plast Surg. Vol 8, No 39. Texas: Baylor University Medical Center; 1998:1-29

Dinsdale SM. Decubitus ulcers: role of pressure and friction in causation. Arch Phys Med Rehabil. Apr 1974;55(4):147-52