

# Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

## Inadequate Nutrition & The Development Of Bed Sores In Nursing Home Patients

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Sad but true, many nursing home patients are suffering from malnutrition. While we often associate malnutrition amongst the homeless or people living in a third-world country, some studies suggest that between 35% and 85% of nursing home patients are malnourished.



As attorney [David Terry](#) points out in his blog post, "[How Does Poor Nutrition Affect the Development of Bed Sores in Nursing Homes?](#)" the rampant malnutrition can be associated with an increased risk of developing bed sores.

Poor nutrition results in a deterioration of body functioning. Over extended period of time, patients without adequate nutrition tend to have organs that begin to fail and critical body functions begin to deteriorate and lose effectiveness.

As the largest organ of the body, your skin is one of the first places where the consequences of inadequate nutrition may be visible. Malnutrition can result in the diminished effectiveness of the skin's natural resilience to pressure and other factors that contribute to the development of bed sores (similarly described as pressure sores, pressure ulcers, or decubitus ulcers).

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog ([www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com](http://www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com)), Bed Sore FAQ ([www.bedsorefaq.com](http://www.bedsorefaq.com)) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

In addition to malnutrition's reduction in the effectiveness in the skin's natural resiliency, malnourishment of nursing home patients may also lead to other medical problems that contribute to the development of bed sores:

**Reduction in Energy Levels:** Malnourished people have less energy and consequently are unable to move on their own—resulting in a more time spent in one position.

**Reduction in the body's natural cushioning:** A long-term consequence of malnourishment is loss of fat, muscle and tissue— that provide necessary padding particularly in bed-bound patients, the less padding the more pressure that is put directly on the body— thereby resulting in increased rate of bed sores.

### Inadequate Nutrition & Hindrance of The Body's Natural Healing Properties

David makes a great point regarding the important role nutrition plays in not just bed sore prevention, but also healing bed sores. One of the most overlooked aspects of bed sore treatment is assuring that facilities provide additional calories and protein for patients with advanced bed sores.

A nutritional consultation should be brought in for patients with open wounds (stage 3 or 4 bed sores) so the specific nutritional needs can be tailored to the patient need.

### **Caregiver tip:**

As family and caregivers it is important to recognize the severity of the medical complications that accompany malnutrition. As with many medical conditions, it is far easier to prevent malnutrition than to treat the accompanying medical complications that tend to develop over time.

Caregivers should be on the lookout for the following:

- Look out for physical signs of malnutrition: diarrhea, disorientation, drastic weight loss, reduced urine output or cracking skin

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- Request a speech therapist consult if your patient has difficulty swallowing
- For bed bound patients, make sure meals are within reach of the patient and there is staff present to assist
- Ask about nutritional supplements for patients who are weak or have existing bed sores

Related Bed Sore FAQ's:

[Can malnutrition cause bed sores?](#)

[Are the development of bed sores during a nursing home admission an indication of nursing home neglect?](#)

[Extra Calories Essential For Pressure Sore Patients To Heal Wounds](#)

Strellis & Field, Chartered

**Chicago Office**

444 N. Wells St., Ste 202  
Chicago, IL 60610  
Tel: 312.201.0000

**Belleville Office**

216 W. Washington Street  
Belleville, IL 62226  
Tel: 618.235.8701

**Waterloo Office**

115 East Mill Street  
Waterloo, IL 62298  
Tel: 618.939.3402