

Pressure ulcers: Current understanding and newer modalities of treatment.

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[Bhattacharya S¹](#), [Mishra RK²](#).

Author information

Abstract

This article reviews the mechanism, symptoms, causes, severity, diagnosis, prevention and present recommendations for surgical as well as non-surgical management of pressure ulcers. Particular focus has been placed on the current understandings and the newer modalities for the treatment of pressure ulcers. The paper also covers the role of nutrition and pressure-release devices such as cushions and mattresses as a part of the treatment algorithm for preventing and quick healing process of these wounds. Pressure ulcers develop primarily from pressure and shear; are progressive in nature and most frequently found in bedridden, chair bound or immobile people. They often develop in people who have been hospitalised for a long time generally for a different problem and increase the overall time as well as cost of hospitalisation that have detrimental effects on patient's quality of life. Loss of sensation compounds the problem manifold, and failure of reactive hyperaemia cycle of the pressure prone area remains the most important aetiopathology. Pressure ulcers are largely preventable in nature, and their management depends on their severity. The available literature about severity of pressure ulcers, their classification and medical care protocols have been described in this paper. The present treatment options include various approaches of cleaning the wound, debridement, optimised dressings, role of antibiotics and reconstructive surgery. The newer treatment options such as negative pressure wound therapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, cell therapy have been discussed, and the advantages and disadvantages of current and newer methods have also been described.

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