



Stage I

In stage I a persistent area of red skin may itch or hurt. The spot can feel warm or spongy to the touch; conversely it may feel hard. In darker skin, the patch may look blue or purple, or appear flaky or ashen. Stage I wounds will usually disappear promptly if the pressure is relieved.



Stage II

In stage II, the skin is already compromised. An open sore that looks like a blister or abrasion is a red flag. The surrounding area may be discolored. When treated promptly, these sores can heal quickly if the person is otherwise in good health and not experiencing other problems such as diabetes or paralysis.



Stage III

Stage III bedsores are often extremely painful and difficult to treat. The pressure ulcer has extended through all the skin layers down to muscle. The deep, crater-like wound indicates permanently destroyed tissue.



Stage IV

Stage IV bedsores, the most serious and advanced stage, destroy muscle, bone, and even tendons and joints. Stage IV bedsores are often lethal