



EDITORIAL

[*Afr. J. Health Sci.* 2023 36 (4): 337]

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ajhs.v36i4.1>

DECUBITUS ULCERS: A COMMON PROBLEM IN BEDRIDDEN PATIENTS

Chronic illness that limits our movement leads to various challenges, making patients to rely on caregivers for various needs. Prevention of decubitus ulcers and their management, when they occur, is essential in the care of bedridden patients.

The common causes of decubitus ulcers are exposure to sustained pressure, friction and shear forces. Peripheral vascular disease, impaired sensation of pain and pressure, and poor nutrition are major contributors to decubitus ulcers.

Decubitus ulcers are largely preventable. Patient education for those who are able to follow instructions is the most important measure to prevent decubitus ulcers. Regular scheduled turning to reduce sustained pressure on soft tissue

is very helpful. Nutrition in these patients is also very important as this maintains the strength of tissues and improves on healing of areas that are affected.

Ripple mattresses, though not readily available to these patients, are indeed very helpful in preventing decubitus ulcers. Regular turning of patients that are bedridden does help to prevent decubitus ulcers as well as skin care creams. Heel elevation and resting on soft material can prevent pressure ulcers on the heels.

Family and friends can play a major role in prevention of decubitus ulcers in homebased patients.



*African Journal of
Health Sciences*

Dr Hudson A. Lodenyo,
Consultant Physician & Gastroenterologist
Centre for Clinical Research

**KENYA MEDICAL RESEARCH
INSTITUTE (KEMRI)**