

PRESSURE ULCER/INJURY RECURRENCE

FAQ ON LONG TERM MANAGEMENT



Frequently asked questions (FAQ) on long term management for preventing recurrent PI in people with SCI

1. Why is long-term management crucial for preventing recurrent PU/PI?

Long-term management ensures that individuals with SCI or other risk factors maintain skin integrity, reduce the risk of recurrence, and optimise their overall health. Ongoing care includes regular assessments, appropriate assistive devices, and access to SCI-specialised healthcare professionals.



2. Why does quality of life relate to PU/PI prevention?

Quality of life considerations are central to PU/PI prevention. This includes access to appropriate seating and bedding, maintaining independence in daily activities, and engaging in social and leisure activities without increasing the risk of PU/PI. Holistic approaches that integrate physical health with mental well-being, personal goals, and life satisfaction help individuals maintain an active and fulfilling life while preventing PUs/Pis.



3. How can individuals with SCI benefit from peer support and community resources?

Peer support groups and community resources provide valuable education, emotional support, and shared experiences from individuals who face similar challenges. These networks can offer practical advice on skin care routines, equipment use, and lifestyle adjustments to prevent PU/PI recurrence. Community organisations can also help advocate for necessary healthcare services and funding for assistive technologies.



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4. What role does early referral play in preventing recurrent PU/PI?

Early referral to SCI-specialised healthcare professionals is essential at any sign of skin changes or discomfort. Prompt assessment and intervention can prevent minor skin issues from developing into severe PU/PIs. Regular check-ups with multidisciplinary teams—including wound care specialists, rehabilitation professionals, and dietitians—help in early identification of risk factors.

5. What preventive strategies should be included in long-term management?

- Skin inspection and care: Daily self-checks (or assisted checks) help detect early signs of skin breakdown.
- Pressure relief techniques: Regular repositioning and understanding the use of pressure-relieving devices such as cushions and mattresses are essential.
- Nutrition and hydration: A balanced diet rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals supports skin integrity and wound healing.
- Assistive technology: Properly fitted seating and mobility aids reduce pressure and shear forces.
- Access to pressure mapping technology as a visual aid to enforce optimised pressure relief and effective pressure relieving manoeuvres.
- Ongoing education and self-management: Individuals and caregivers should be educated on skin health, PU/PI prevention techniques, and early warning signs.



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6. What should be included in emergency preparedness for individuals at risk of PIs and healthcare professionals in the community?

Emergency preparedness ensures that both individuals with SCI and healthcare professionals in the community are ready to respond immediately when the first signs of PU/PI development appear or when a pressure injury has already developed. Timely action is crucial to prevent worsening of the condition and to ensure rapid access to appropriate care.



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Key elements for individuals in risk of PU/PI:

- Awareness of early signs of PU/PI (redness, persistent discoloration, temperature changes, pain, or changes in skin texture).
- A personal action plan outlining steps to take at the first sign of PU/PI, including offloading pressure, optimising positioning, and increasing skin monitoring.
- Assistance or support may be needed to determine and understand the potential causes of PU/PI, such as changes in routine, equipment adjustments, or possible trauma to the skin or underlying tissues.
- A pre-identified healthcare contact person (e.g., nurse, wound specialist, or SCI-specialised professional) for immediate guidance.
- Access to essential wound care supplies (dressings, skin protectants and pressure-relieving equipment).
- A plan for urgent medical assessment if the PU/PI worsens despite initial management.
- Education on self-monitoring and early intervention strategies for both individuals and caregivers.

Key elements for healthcare professionals in the community:

- Protocols for early identification and intervention at the first sign of PU/PI development.
- Clear referral pathways for timely escalation of care, including access to SCI-specialised services.
- Knowledge of evidence-based wound care and pressure management techniques.
- Coordination with multidisciplinary teams to ensure appropriate follow-up and adjustments in care plans.

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- Access to telemedicine or remote consultation options for quick expert evaluation.
- Training for caregivers and individuals with SCI on recognising early warning signs and implementing preventive strategies.

By ensuring that both individuals and healthcare professionals are prepared to act immediately, the risk of PU/PI progression can be minimised, improving healing outcomes and reducing the likelihood of complications.



7. How can telemedicine support long-term PU/PI prevention?

Telemedicine provides remote access to SCI-specialised healthcare professionals, allowing for early detection of skin issues and timely interventions. It enables individuals to receive expert guidance without frequent travel, making healthcare more accessible and reducing the risk of hospitalization due to PU/PI complications.

8. Why is lifelong follow-up important?

Lifelong follow-up —either in-person or via telemedicine— ensures that individuals continue to receive necessary assessments, adjustments to mobility aids, and education on evolving best practices in PU/PI prevention. It also allows healthcare professionals to identify and address any new risk factors that may arise over time.

