



### Fact sheet on prevalence and incidence of pressure ulcer in individuals with spinal cord injury

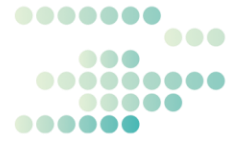


Page 1 of 4

- The **global incidence** of pressure ulcers (PUs) related to patients with SCI was **0.23** (95% CI, 0.20-0.26)<sup>1</sup>.
- The pooled incidence:
  - **The highest** in **South American** countries, **0.43** (95% CI, 0.28-0.57)
  - In **Asian countries** reached **0.16** (95% CI, 0.06-0.25)
  - The lowest in comparison with other regions, such as **0.36** (95% CI, 0.16-0.56) in **African countries**, **0.25** (95% CI, 0.14-0.37) in **European countries**, and **0.23** (95% CI, 0.19-0.27) in **North American countries**.
- The reported **incidence was higher in developing countries than in developed countries**, **0.27** (95% CI, 0.17-0.37) vs. **0.22** (95% CI, 0.19-0.26) respectively<sup>1</sup>.
- The **global pooled magnitude** of PUs among people with SCI was **32.36%** (95% CI, 28.21-36.51)<sup>6</sup>.
  - **The highest** in **Africa**, **41.94%** (95% CI, 31.70-52.18).
  - **The lowest** in **North America**, **24.12%** (95% CI, 28.14-46.81), compared to **Europe**, **37.47%** (95% CI, 28.14-46.81), and **Asia**, **32.07%** (95% CI, 27.99-36.15)<sup>6</sup>
- In a most recent study<sup>9</sup> concluded that the **overall incidence of PU among SCI patients is 28.8%** (95% CI, 24.2-33.4).
  - **The highest incidence** is reported in **South American countries**, **65.3%** (95% CI, 55.9-74.7).
  - **The lowest** incidence was in **Asian countries**, **20.9%** (95% CI, 12.8-28.9).
  - The new review interestingly **points out the declining global incidence of PU in SCI patients**. **PU incidence rate was 33.9%** (95% CI, 27.1-40.7) **before 2005** and **27.1%** (95% CI, 20.8-33.3) **from 2016-2024**.

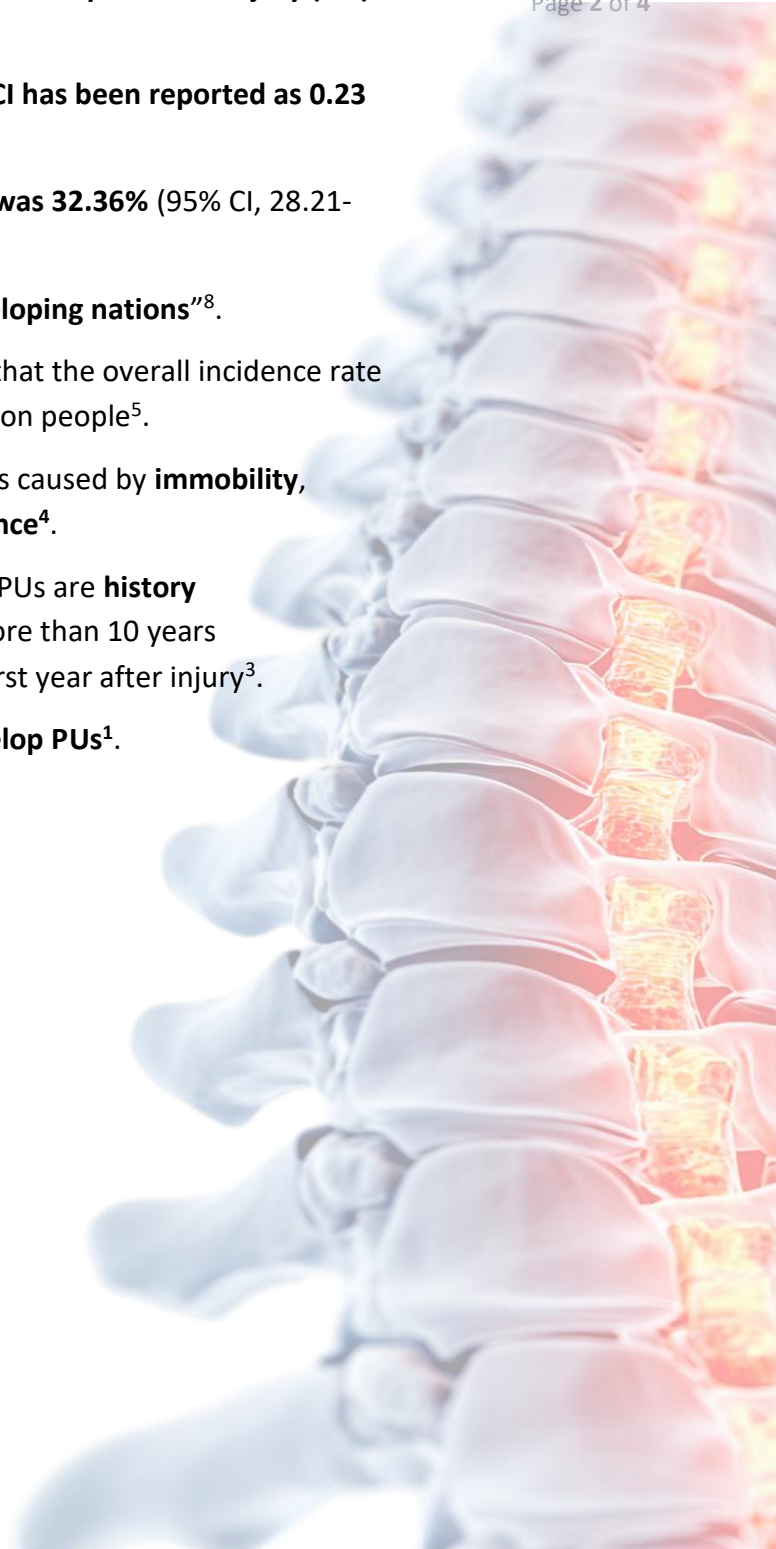
# PRESSURE ULCER/INJURY RECURRENCE

## FACT SHEET ON PREVALENCE AND INCIDENCE



Page 2 of 4

- **15 million people** are living with SCI in 2024<sup>7</sup>.
- The incidence of SCI in China ranges from **14.6 to 60.6 per million**<sup>1</sup>.
- **Pressure ulcers (PUs) are high-risk complications of spinal cord injury (SCI) individuals.**
- **The global incidence of PUs associated with SCI has been reported as 0.23 (95% CI, 0.20-0.26)**<sup>4</sup>.
- **The global pooled magnitude of PUs with SCI was 32.36% (95% CI, 28.21-36.51)**<sup>6</sup>.
- SCI-associated **PUs** are “**very prevalent in developing nations**”<sup>8</sup>.
- The pooled results from 229 studies indicated that the overall incidence rate of SCI was 23.77 (95% CI, 21.50-26.15) per million people<sup>5</sup>.
- The **higher risk of PUs** among people with SCI is caused by **immobility, insensate skin**, or a varying range of **incontinence**<sup>4</sup>.
- **Other risk factors** related to the recurrence of PUs are **history of PUs** and **duration of SCI** - especially after more than 10 years post-injury, with the highest incidence in the first year after injury<sup>3</sup>.
- **More than 1 in 5 individuals with SCI will develop PUs**<sup>1</sup>.



# PRESSURE ULCER/INJURY RECURRENCE

## FACT SHEET ON PREVALENCE AND INCIDENCE

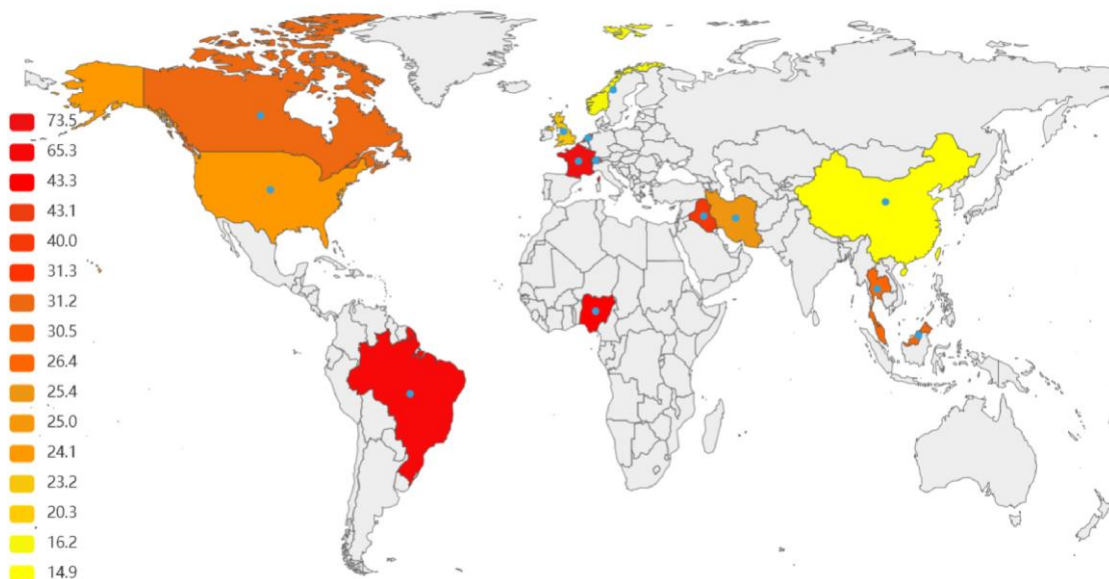


Figure 1. Global incidence of PUs in individuals with SCI (%). Xu J, Jiao Y, Wang N, Xu X, Yang L, Han L, et al. Incidence of pressure injuries in patients with spinal cord injury: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Tissue Viability*. 2025 Mar 3;100881. Published under CC-BY License 4.0.

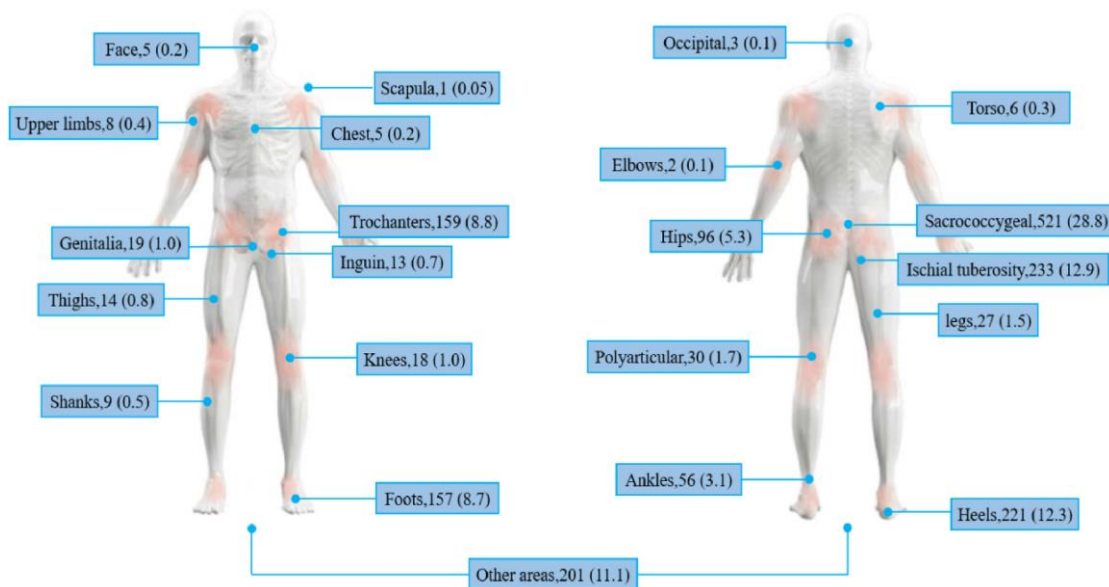


Figure 2. Anatomical locations of PUs in SCI individuals (most affected body sites; n,%). Xu J, Jiao Y, Wang N, Xu X, Yang L, Han L, et al. Incidence of pressure injuries in patients with spinal cord injury: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Tissue Viability*. 2025 Mar 3;100881. Published under CC-BY License 4.0.

---

# PRESSURE ULCER/INJURY RECURRENCE

## FACT SHEET ON PREVALENCE AND INCIDENCE

---



Page 4 of 4

### REFERENCES

1. Chen HL, Cai JY, Du L, Shen HW, Yu HR, Song YP, et al. Incidence of Pressure Injury in Individuals With Spinal Cord Injury: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *J Wound Ostomy Continence Nurs.* 2020;47(3):215–23.
2. Chen C, Qiao X, Liu W, Fekete C, Reinhardt JD. Epidemiology of spinal cord injury in China: A systematic review of the chinese and english literature. *Spinal cord* [Internet]. 2022; Available from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35778501/>
3. Gabbe BJ, Nunn A. Profile and costs of secondary conditions resulting in emergency department presentations and readmission to hospital following traumatic spinal cord injury. *Injury.* 2016;47(8):1847–55.
4. Larcher Caliri MH. Spinal Cord Injury and Pressure Ulcers. *Nursing Clinics of North America.* 2005 Jun 1;40(2):337–47.
5. Lu Y, Shang Z, Zhang W, Pang M, Hu X, Dai Y, et al. Global incidence and characteristics of spinal cord injury since 2000-2021: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Med.* 2024 Jul 8;22(1):285.
6. Shiferaw WS, Akalu TY, Mulugeta H, Aynalem YA. The global burden of pressure ulcers among patients with spinal cord injury: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC musculoskeletal disorders* [Internet]. 2020;21(1).
7. World Health Organization. Spinal cord injury [Internet]. [cited 2025 Jan 20]. Available from: <https://who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/spinal-cord-injury>
8. Zakrasek EC, Creasey G, Crew JD. Pressure ulcers in people with spinal cord injury in developing nations. *Spinal Cord.* 2015;53(1):7–13.
9. Xu J, Jiao Y, Wang N, Xu X, Yang L, Han L, et al. Incidence of pressure injuries in patients with spinal cord injury: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Tissue Viability.* 2025 Mar 3;100881. doi:10.1016/j.jtv.2025.100881