

STAGES OF PRESSURE ULCERS

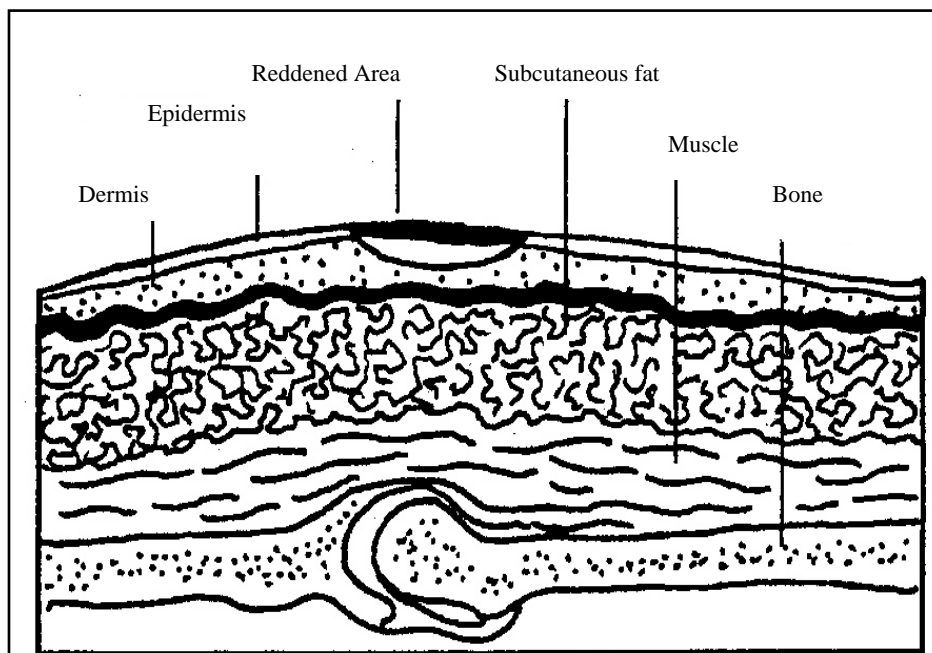
The staging system is one method of summarizing certain characteristics of pressure ulcers, including the extent of tissue damage. This is the system used within the RAI.

Stage I pressure ulcers may be difficult to identify because they are not readily visible and they present with greater variability. Advanced technology (not commonly available in nursing homes) has shown that a Stage I pressure ulcer may have minimal to substantial tissue damage in layers beneath the skin's surface, even when there is no visible surface penetration. The Stage I indicators identified below will generally persist or be evident after the pressure on the area has been removed for 30-45 minutes.

The definitions for the stages of pressure ulcers identified below, are from the NPUAP and used with permission.

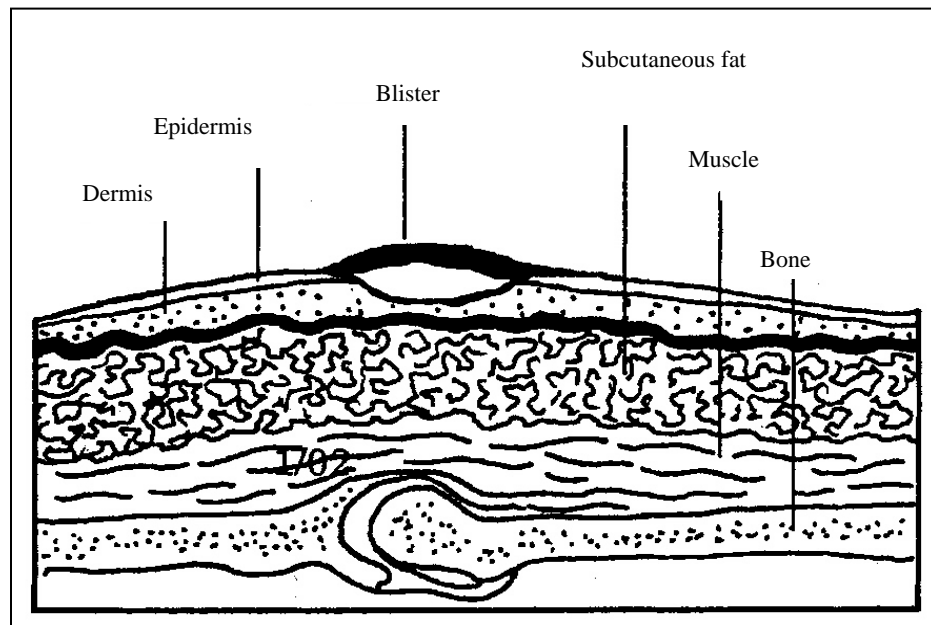
- A. Stage I – an observable, pressure-related alteration of intact skin, whose indicators as compared to an adjacent or opposite area on the body may include changes in one or more of the following parameters:
1. Skin temperature (warmth or coolness);
 2. Tissue consistency (firm or boggy);
 3. Sensation (pain, itching); and/or
 4. A defined area of persistent redness in lightly pigmented skin, whereas in darker skin tones, the ulcer may appear with persistent red, blue, or purple hues.

Stage I.



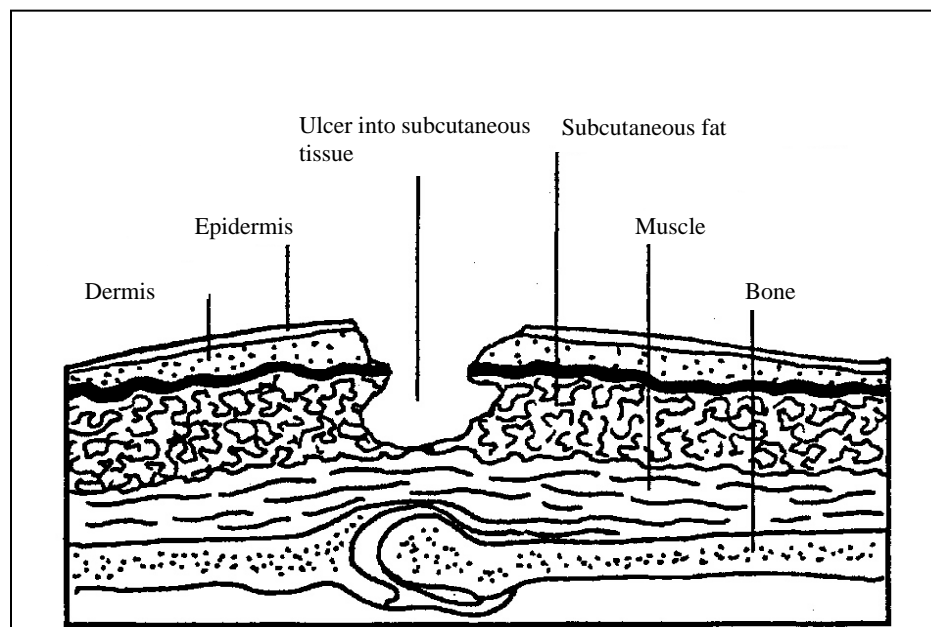
- B. Stage II – partial thickness skin loss involving epidermis, dermis, or both. The ulcer is superficial and presents clinically as an abrasion, blister, or shallow crater.

Stage II.



- C. Stage III – Full thickness skin loss involving damage to, or death of, subcutaneous tissue that may extend down to, but not through, underlying fascia. The ulcer presents clinically as a deep crater with or without undermining of adjacent tissue.

Stage III.



- D. Stage IV – full thickness skin loss with extensive destruction, tissue necrosis, or damage to muscle, bone, or supporting structures (e.g., tendon, joint capsule). Undermining and sinus tracts also may be associated with Stage IV pressure ulcers.

Stage IV.

