
Is it a Pressure Ulcer, or is it something else?

Different wound types and skin injuries can commonly be misdiagnosed and documented as pressure ulcers. Differentiating wounds is very important for identifying appropriate wound treatment.

Common conditions often misconstrued as pressure ulcers include:

- Skin tears
- Arterial Ulcers
- Diabetic Ulcers
- Venous Ulcers
- Perineal Dermatitis
- Friction
- Maceration
- Shear

Examples:



Skin Tear: A wound resulting from separation of the epidermis from the dermis. Typically found on the arms, hands and legs.
Photo copyright: NDNQI

Arterial Ulcer: A wound caused by impairment of arterial blood flow to an extremity. Typically found on the legs, feet, and toes.
Photo copyright: NDNQI



Is it a Pressure Ulcer, or is it something else?



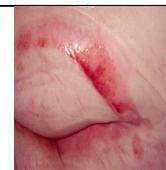
Diabetic Ulcer: An ulcer often caused by a combination of diabetes induced foot neuropathy, and diabetes induced vascular disease. Typically found on feet, heels, or toes.
Photo copyright: NPUAP

Venous Ulcer: A wound caused by a decrease in blood flow return from the lower extremities to the heart. This damage and loss of skin is typically found on the lower calf above the ankle.
Photo copyright: NPUAP



Perineal Dermatitis: Skin irritation that occurs most commonly from incontinence. Leads to irritation, inflammation, erosion, and/or infection. Typically located at the perineum, buttocks, and upper thighs.
Photo copyright: Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Friction: Resistance generated between two objects moving in opposite directions. Commonly occurs when moving residents.
Photo copyright: NPUAP



Maceration: Refers to skin changes seen when moisture is trapped against the skin for a prolonged period. The skin may soften, wrinkle, and turn white. Macerated skin can easily become infected with bacteria.
Photo copyright: NPUAP

Shear: Gravity and friction interact against the surface of the skin. Separation of tissue parallel to skin surface may occur.
Photo copyright: NPUAP



Photo copyright: NPUAP, NDNQI, and Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
