

Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces

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Background and General Information

This guideline addresses Group 1 and Group 2 pressure reducing support surfaces.

Group 1 Support Surface Criteria

A Group 1 Support Surface (HCPCS E0181, E0182, E0184, E0185, E0186, E0187, E0188, E0189, E0196, E0197, E0198, E0199, A4640) is considered medically necessary when there is documentation of **any** of the following:

- The individual is completely immobile.
- The individual has limited mobility and **any** of the conditions listed below:
 - impaired nutrition
 - bowel or bladder incontinence
 - impaired sensation
 - compromised circulatory system
- The individual has any stage pressure ulcer on the trunk or pelvis.

Group 2 Support Surface Criteria

A Group 2 Support Surface (HCPCS E0193, E0277, E0371, E0372, E0373) is considered medically necessary when there is documentation of **any** of the following:

- multiple stage 2 pressure ulcers on the trunk or pelvis and there is documentation of a comprehensive ulcer treatment program including **all** of the following:
 - regular assessment by licensed healthcare provider
 - appropriate wound care including measurements and topical dressings
 - repositioning and mobilization program for offloading of pressure
 - management of moisture and incontinence (if present)
 - use of a Group 1 support surface has been tried and failed or ruled out
- one or more stage 3 or stage 4 pressure ulcers on the trunk or pelvis
- myocutaneous flap or a skin graft for a pressure ulcer of the trunk or pelvis within the last 60 days

Additional information

- The item is considered a 13-month capped rental or a purchase item.

- After 13 months of rental, the purchase price is satisfied and the item is then owned by the individual.

Continued rental

Continued rental of a Group 1 or Group 2 Support Surface is considered medically necessary when there is documentation of continued use and continued medical need of the support surface.

Evidence Discussion

A pressure ulcer is a localized tissue injury resulting from sustained pressure applied to the skin and/or underlying soft tissues, typically occurring over bony prominences or in association with medical devices. Effective prevention and management strategies emphasize pressure redistribution, which involves the use of specialized support surfaces and postural adjustments.¹² Support surfaces include mattresses, mattress overlays and cushions that are used to distribute the surface pressure more evenly. However, only approximately 62% of at-risk individuals use support surfaces.¹

Huang et al. (2023) conducted a review of 12 studies (3 RCTs, 3 systematic reviews, 3 guidelines, and 3 evidence summaries) and found that the treatment of pressure ulcers in complex, but standardized, evidence-based prevention and treatment are important to reduce the incidence of pressure ulcers.¹

Shi et al. (2021) included a review of 32 studies (n=9058) and found that alternating pressure air surfaces that regularly redistribute the pressure under an individual's body may reduce the risk of pressure ulcers developing, especially when compared to foam surfaces. Further research should prioritize which support services offer the least likelihood of pressure ulcers as well as report quality of life for individuals using the pressure reducing support surfaces.²

In a network meta-analysis by Shi et al. (2021), the authors found that static air overlays, alternating pressure air mattresses, and static gel pads may reduce pressure ulcer risk compared with foam mattresses. This study also found evidence that suggested more individuals with ulcers may heal completely using static air surfaces than foam surfaces; however, it is unclear which treatment is best for preventing pressure ulcers.³

¹ Huang L, Yan Y, Huang Y, et al. Summary of best evidence for prevention and control of pressure ulcer on support surfaces. *Int Wound J*. 2023;20(6):2276-2285. doi:10.1111/iwj.14109

² Shi C, Dumville JC, Cullum N, Rhodes S, Jammali-Biasi A, McInnes E. Alternating pressure (active) air surfaces for preventing pressure ulcers. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2021;5(5):CD013620. Published 2021 May 10. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD013620.pub2

³ Shi C, Dumville JC, Cullum N, et al. Beds, overlays and mattresses for preventing and treating pressure ulcers: an overview of Cochrane Reviews and network meta-analysis. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2021;8(8):CD013761. Published 2021 Aug 16. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD013761.pub2

Group 1 Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces

Code	Description
E0181	Powered pressure reducing mattress overlay/pad, alternating, with pump, includes heavy duty
E0182	Pump for alternating pressure pad, for replacement only
E0183	Powered pressure reducing underlay/pad, alternating, with pump, includes heavy duty
E0184	Dry pressure mattress
E0185	Gel or gel-like pressure pad for mattress, standard mattress length and width pressure mattress
E0186	Air pressure mattress
E0187	Water pressure mattress
E0188	Synthetic sheepskin pad
E0189	Lambswool sheepskin pad, any size
E0196	Gel pressure mattress
E0197	Air pressure pad for mattress, standard mattress length and width
E0198	Water pressure pad for mattress, standard mattress length and width
E0199	Dry pressure pad for mattress, standard mattress length and width
E0227	Powered pressure-reducing air mattress
E0370	Air pressure elevator for heel
A4640	Replacement pad for use with medically necessary alternating pressure pad

Group 2 Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces

HCPCS code	Description
E0193	Powered air flotation bed (low air loss therapy)
E0277	Powered pressure-reducing air mattress
E0371	Nonpowered advanced pressure reducing overlay for mattress, standard mattress length and width
E0372	Powered air overlay for mattress, standard mattress length and width
E0373	Nonpowered advanced pressure reducing mattress

References

1. Shi C, Dumville JC, Cullum N. Support surfaces for pressure ulcer prevention: A network meta-analysis. *PLoS One*. 2018;13(2):e0192707. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0192707.
2. National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance. Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: Quick Reference Guide. Emily Haesler (Ed.). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, Australia; 2014.
3. National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance. Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: Clinical Practice Guideline. Emily Haesler (Ed.). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, Western Australia; 2014.
4. CGS Administrators, LLC, ed. Local Coverage Determination for Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces - Group 2 (L33642). CMS.gov. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database>. Published October 1, 2015. Revised May 1, 2021.
5. Gould L, Stuntz M, Giovannelli M, et al. Wound Healing Society 2015 update on guidelines for pressure ulcers. *Wound Repair Regen*. 2016;24(1):145-162. doi:10.1111/wrr.123962.