

Group 1 and Group 2 Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces

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Background and General Information

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

Health Equity Consideration

Health equity is the highest level of health for all individuals; health inequity is the avoidable difference in health status or distribution of health resources due to the social conditions in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, and age. Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environment that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks. Examples include the following: safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods; racism, discrimination, and violence; education, job opportunities, and income; access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities; access to clean air and water; and language and literacy skills.

Group 1 Support Surface Criteria

A Group 1 Support Surface 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 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 **any** of the following:

- regular assessment by a 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.

Evidence Discussion

Huang et al. (2023) systematically reviewed evidence from 12 sources published between 2000 and 2022, including three randomized controlled trials, three systematic reviews, three evidence-based guidelines, and three evidence summaries, to evaluate pressure ulcer prevention and control with various support surfaces. A total of 19 recommendations emerged across three domains: assessment and selection of support surfaces, proper use of support surfaces, and team-based management with quality control measures. Evidence grading using standardized instruments (AGREE II, AMSTAR 2, and JBI criteria) yielded recommendations classified as either A-level (strong) or B-level (weak), depending on study quality. The study highlighted that only 61.8% of at-risk individuals used support surfaces, most commonly electric inflatable mattresses, and noted frequent misalignment between support surface selection and ulcer stage or anatomical site. The authors concluded that optimal prevention required tailored selection and consistent use of support surfaces within structured interdisciplinary programs. They acknowledged limitations including the heterogeneity of interventions, scattered and fragmented evidence, and a lack of high-quality, site-specific or stage-specific trials.

A 2021 overview (Shi et al.) examined six Cochrane reviews that collectively included 68 trials involving 18,174 individuals for pressure injury prevention and 12 trials involving 972 individuals for treatment. For prevention, pooled analyses suggested that both reactive air support surfaces and alternating pressure air surfaces were associated with fewer new pressure injuries when compared with foam surfaces, although the certainty of evidence was rated as low. Time-to-event analyses suggested a lower likelihood of pressure injury development with reactive air surfaces. For treatment, pooled findings suggested that reactive air surfaces were associated with higher rates of

complete healing and shorter time to healing compared with foam surfaces. The authors concluded that reactive and alternating pressure air support surfaces likely offered benefits over foam surfaces for both prevention and treatment of pressure injuries, but emphasized that the evidence was limited by low certainty and did not allow reliable ranking of support surface types. Key limitations included substantial risk of bias across studies, heterogeneity of interventions, sparse comparative data, and the absence of consistently reported statistical significance measures.

Group 1 Pressure Reducing Support Surfaces

The inclusion of any code in this table does not imply that the code is under management or requires prior authorization. Refer to the applicable health plan for management details. Prior authorization of a code listed in this table is not a guarantee of payment. The Certificate of Coverage or Evidence of Coverage policy outlines the terms and conditions of the member's health insurance policy.

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

Code	Description
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

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HCPSC 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

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