

CASE STUDY

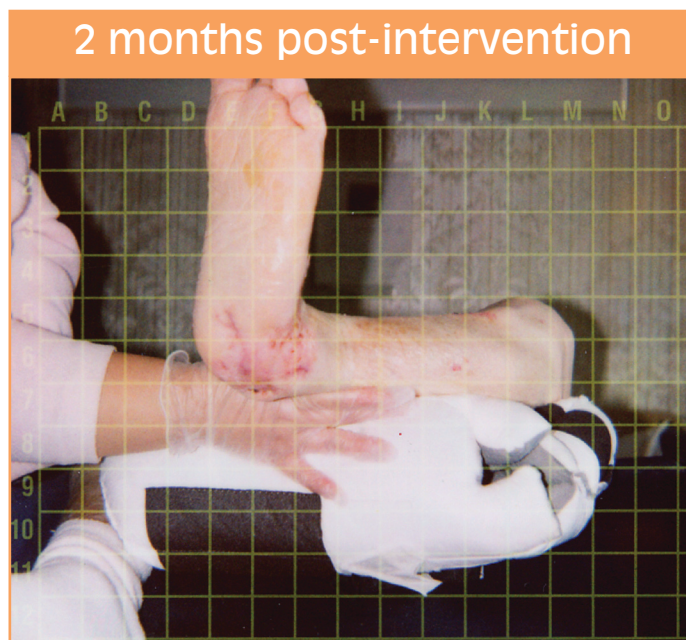
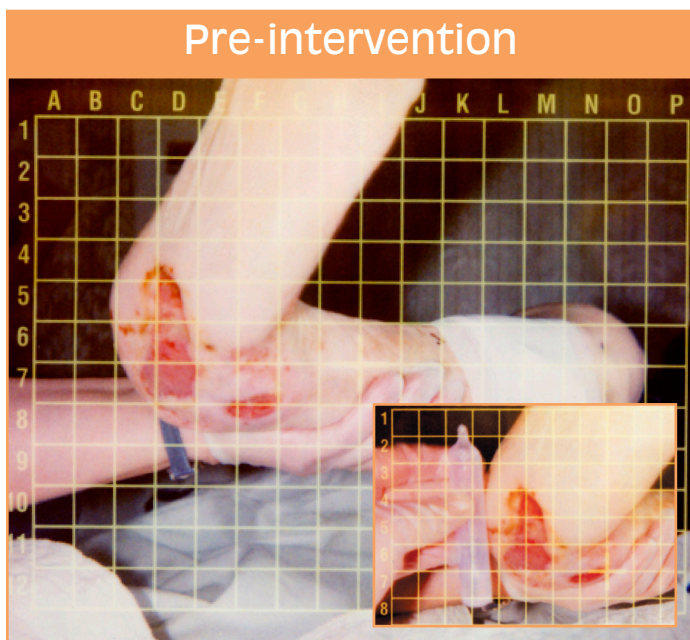
Intervention with a new heel protection device and silver alginate dressing to prevent amputation of the leg due to stage IV ulcer of the heel and malleolus

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Objective: To heal an existing, Stage IV ulcer of the heel and malleolus in order to prevent amputation of the patient's leg.

Problem: In October 2004, an 88-year old male patient diagnosed with hypertension, CVA and PVD was admitted to Salem Village Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (Joliet, IL) with severe contracture to his knee and existing, Stage IV ulcer of the heel and lateral malleolus. After no improvement in the wound's status, the facility performed a skin graft, which did not take, in July 2005. All totaled, clinicians had spent two years trying to heal the wound without success. In December 2005, the patient's family consulted with the surgeon to discuss further options to minimize patient suffering. Due to the contracture, the surgeon recommended amputation of the leg above the knee.

Interventions: After seeing a new protective heel device, Prevalon™ Pressure-Relieving Heel Protector (Sage Products, Inc., Cary, IL) at the Advances in Skin and Wound Care Conference (Las Vegas, NV) in October 2005, nursing staff believed the new device might be helpful to the patient. After pleading with the patient's family, nursing won approval to try the new device for one month before amputation. The only intervention changes were implementing the new heel protection device and utilizing silver alginate for wound dressing.



Results: After the first month, the family saw great improvement and granted clinicians an additional month to continue the new treatment. At the end of the second month, the wound was closed for the first time in two years. The patient developed no new ulcers or other complications to the lower leg area during the new interventions. By May 2006, the wound had completely healed.

Patient Outcome: Implementing a new heel protection device and dressing a severe, Stage IV ulcer with silver alginate promoted wound healing. The new device also prevented future ulcers to the patient's heel and malleolus. The patient continued to wear the heel protector and had no return of any breakdown to the heel.

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