

Age as a Prognostic Tool in Outcomes of Advanced Pressure Ulcers

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Background

Pressure ulcers (PU) continue to disproportionately affect chronically ill patients with limited mobility.

Purpose

- Understand the factors that impact pressure ulcer closure.
- Equip providers with data to guide informed discussion of treatment options, postoperative quality of life, and anticipated duration of treatment.

Methods

We performed a retrospective chart review of patients.

Patients diagnosed with stages 3 and 4 PU of the sacrum, ischium, trochanter, leg, chest, and back were identified: <20 years old (1.3%), 20-29 (1.3%), 30-39 (15.8%), 40-49 (9.0%), 50-59 (18.4%), 60-69 (15.8%), 70-79 (21.1%), 80-89 (13.2%), and 90-99 (3.9%). Their subsequent care was tracked.

These patients underwent urgent surgical debridement of their PU by the Acute Care Surgery Service at Rush University Medical Center between 2017 and 2022.

Classification

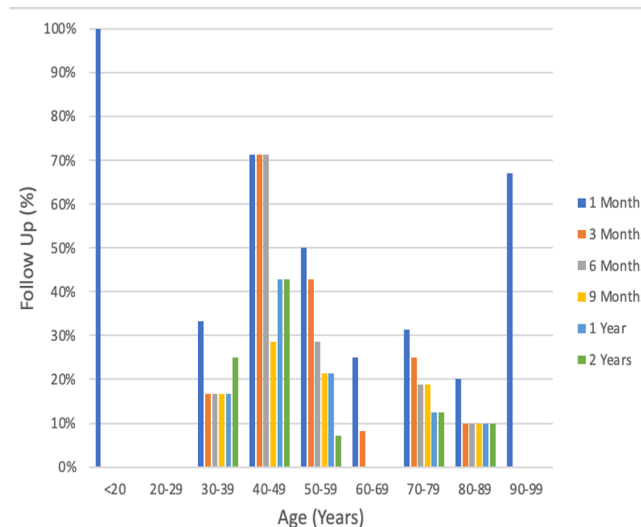
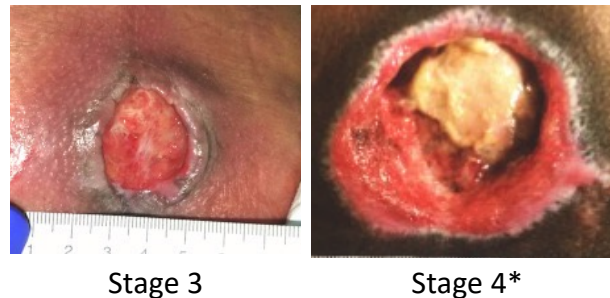


Figure 1. Percentage of patients who followed up after pressure ulcer treatment across age groups

Results

- 76 patients fit the inclusion criteria for the study.
- Follow up at 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, and 2 years is presented in Figure 1, by age group.
- One PU achieved closure by 3 months among those 50-59yr
One PU achieved closure by 6 months among those 50-59yr
One PU achieved closure by 6 months among those 40-49yr

Conclusion

- With increasing patient age, likelihood of healing decreased.**
- This study highlights the low likelihood of closure of advanced pressure ulcers with increasing age.** No patients ages 60+ had achieved PU closure by 2 years post-debridement, despite those patients representing >50% of the population examined.
- Long-term follow up was poor across all age groups.** The greatest rates of short-term follow up were observed in those 40-49 and 50-59, which may coincide with their success in PU closure.
- The ulcer becomes a chronic problem that most patients will live with for years to come.**
- Advanced pressure ulcer closure is a rare event.**

**Photos from Mervis, J.S., Phillips, T.J.: Pressure ulcers: Pathophysiology, epidemiology, risk factors, and presentation. JAAD 2019; 81: pp. 881-890.*