

Glossary

Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) – Is a numerical figure which indicates a quantifiable pressure index. The pressure index is determined by means of Doppler Ultra Sound. The **ABI** is obtained by dividing the systolic ankle pressure by the systolic brachial pressure.

ABI above 1.2 may indicate calcified arteries and should not be compressed

ABI between 0.8 -1.2– Considered normal- full compression

ABI between 0.6-0.8 – Mixed venous/ arterial disease-lower (mild to moderate) compression

ABI lower than 0.5 –Significant arterial disease- do not initiate compression, refer to a Vascular Surgeon

Advanced Wound Clinician– A practitioner with advanced wound care knowledge. This may include Physicians, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Enterostomal Nurses, Clinical Resource Nurses.

Bacterial Burden (Bioburden) – The metabolic load imposed by bacteria in tissue.

Bottoming out - Expression used to describe inadequate support from a mattress overlay or seat cushion as determined by a “hand check”. To perform a hand check, the caregiver places an outstretched hand (palm up) under the overlay or cushion below the pressure ulcer or that part of the body at risk for a pressure ulcer. If the caregiver feels less than an inch of support material, the patient has bottomed out and the support surface is therefore inadequate.

Cellulitis– Diffuse inflammatory process within soft tissues, characterized by edema, redness, pain and interference with function. Constitutional complaints of fever, chills, fatigue, nausea may be present.

Charcot Foot (Arthropathy) –Acute- Foot deformity with sudden onset of swelling, increased local skin temperature, erythema, rapid joint changes, looseness of ligaments, dislocation and fractures without apparent cause.

Charcot Foot (Arthropathy -Chronic -progressive degeneration of the stress-bearing portion of a joint, with hypertrophic changes at the periphery. It is manifested by rapid joint changes, looseness of ligaments, dislocation and fractures.

Chemotherapy – the use of a drug (chemical agent) to treat cancers that have a specific and toxic effect on the disease causing organism. A wide variety of chemotherapy drugs are used in the treatment of cancer.

Colonization – The presence of bacteria on the surface or in the tissue of a wound without indications of infection such as purulent exudate, foul odor, or surrounding inflammation.

Cutaneous pain- pain caused by stimulation of nerves in the skin.

Debridement– Removal of devitalized tissue.

Dependent rubor- Dusty purple colour of lower extremity when positioned lower than heart. Disappears when extremity elevated.

Dermatitis– An inflammatory rash marked by itching and redness.

Dermis – The layer of skin that lies beneath the epidermis. It is highly vascular, tough connective tissue that contains nerves, lymphatics, sebaceous glands, and hair follicles.

Epidermis– The outer most layer of skin that is thin and avascular.

Erythema– Redness of skin surface produced by vasodilatation.

Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate (ESR) – Blood test performed to compare with other laboratory values for diagnosing inflammatory conditions. Increased rate may indicate acute inflammatory process, acute and chronic infections, tissue damage, rheumatoid, collagen disease, malignancies, and physiologic stress situations.

Eschar– Thick, leathery necrotic tissue; devitalized tissue. May be black or dark brown.

Extrinsic Factors – Due to causes from outside the body.

Extrusive tumor- a tumor that extends outward away from normal skin surface.

Exudate – Accumulation of fluids in a wound; may contain serum, cellular debris, bacteria and leukocytes.

Fascia – (superficial) The areolar connective tissue and adipose tissue below the dermis of the skin.

Fibrin – A stringy, insoluble protein, responsible for the semi-solid character of a blood clot.

Fibrinous– Accumulation of fluids and fibrin (a stringy insoluble protein).

Friable- Easily broken down tissue, red, beefy appearance, bleeds easily.

Friction – Occurs when two surfaces move across each other. It may lead to the physiologic wearing away of tissue.

Heel positioning device – Device designed to reduce or relieve pressure at the heels.

HgbA_{1c} – Glycated hemoglobin, also known as glycohemoglobin, glycosylated hemoglobin, HbA_{1c} or HbA₁, refers to a series of stable hemoglobin components formed by the combination of glucose and hemoglobin. Individuals with higher levels of blood glucose will have higher levels of glycated hemoglobin. Because the hemoglobin components are stable, the level provides an average indication of the overall blood glucose levels over the prior two to three month period. The most commonly used version of the glycated hemoglobin test is the HbA_{1c}.

Hyperemia– Presence of excess blood in the vessels, engorgement.

Hypergranulation – Proliferation of granulation tissue protruding above the level of surrounding skin

Hyperkeratotic – Hypertrophy of the horny layer of skin.

Induration – Abnormal firmness of tissue with definite margin resulting from injury, inflammation, or infection.

Intrinsic Factors - Due to causes or elements within the body.

La Place's Law –
$$P = \frac{T \times N \times \text{constant}}{C \times W}$$

P = sub-bandage pressures **T**= tension **N**= number of layers
C= limb circumference **W**= width of bandage.

The sub-bandage pressure will increase as more layers are applied

Lymphedema- an abnormal accumulation of tissue fluid (lymph) in the interstitial spaces.

Maceration – To soften by wetting or soaking. In this context it refers to degenerative changes and disintegration of skin when it has been kept too moist.

Malignant/ malignancy- a neoplasm or tumor that is cancerous as opposed to being benign

Malleolus – Either of the two rounded protuberances on the side of the ankle, the inner formed by a projection of the tibia and outer projection of the fibula.

Monofilament Test or Semmes Weinstein Monofilament Test

- Is a sensory exam of the foot to detect *sensory neuropathy* – a 10 gram monofilament which is pressed to several sights on the feet for 1.5 seconds on each sight and the patient is asked to say “yes” when the monofilament is felt.

Neuropathic pain- refers to pain or discomfort resulting from injury to the nervous system either centrally or peripherally with loss of normal ascending sensory functions.

Neuropathy – Any functional and/or pathological changes in the nervous system

Neuropathy (Autonomic) - Nerve damage that affects the body’s ability to regulate temperature and is manifested by the decreased function of sweat glands.

Neuropathy (Motor) – Damage to the nerves that affect the body’s ability to receive and send appropriate messages to the muscles that flex and extend the joints of the foot.

Neuropathy (Sensory)- Nerve damage that inhibits the sensory pathways of the individual, and is manifested by sensations of tingling, burning, pain and numbness.

Nociceptive pain- a free nerve ending that is a receptor for pain.

Nocturnal Pain – Pain occurring at night.

Opioids-Any synthetic narcotic derived from opium

Orthotics – a full contact semi rigid, soft insert designed to redistribute pressure, reduce impact, *shear* and stabilize involved joints. A suitable prescription should include a complete diagnosis, reflecting the risk category of the patient. Orthotics must be casted and fitted appropriately by an experienced professionally trained clinician.

Osteomyelitis – Inflammation of bone and marrow, usually caused by infection.

Pedal Pulses - Pulses in the foot – the dorsalis pedis and posterior tibial artery.

Peri-wound – The skin region immediately surrounding a wound.

Pre-albumin – a blood test used as a protein status indicator; also sensitive to inflammatory stress and infection. It has a half-life of 2-3 days , and can be used as an indicator of nutritional improvement and as a measure of how well nutritional interventions are working.

Preventative pressure reduction mattress/seat cushion - A pressure reduction mattress or seat cushion used primarily to prevent the development of pressure ulcers in at risk patients or to treat patients with existing stage 1 or 2 pressure ulcers.

Pruritis- severe itching

Radiation- ionizing rays used for therapeutic purposes (cancer treatment).

Reverse staging – Using pressure ulcer staging systems in reverse order to describe improvement in a pressure ulcer.

Sanguinous – Bloody, having an abundance of blood.

Selective debridement – Debridement process which removes devitalized tissue only.

Serous – Containing or producing serum or a substance having a watery consistency.

Shear – A unit of force applied horizontally or parallel to a surface causing distortion of the tissue.

Subcutaneous - Tissue beneath the dermal layer of skin, which stores fat for temperature regulation.

Therapeutic pressure reduction mattress/seat cushion – A pressure reduction mattress or seat cushion used primarily to treat patients with existing stage 3 or 4 pressure ulcers.

Toe Pressure – A test to measure the blood pressure of the toe. A more reliable evaluation of individuals with arterial calcification (common in persons with diabetes) to indicate blood flow.

Tunneling – A narrow channel or passageway under or beyond wound margin.

Undermining – A closed passageway under the surface of the skin that is open only at the skin surface. Generally it appears as an area of skin ulceration at the margins of the ulcer with skin overlying the area. Undermining often develops from shearing forces.

Vascular Insufficiency – Indicates poor blood supply, which may prevent appropriate wound healing.

Venous Hypertension – Abnormally increased pressure in the lower extremities (venous system).

Venous Stasis Eczema or Dermatitis – Stagnation of blood caused by venous congestion. High pressure prevents oxygenation at the tissue level resulting in localized ischemia and fibrosis.