



Pressure Injury Prevention in the Emergency Department Triage Level 3 & Level 4

The Emergency Department Triage is a system that categorizes patients based on the severity of their injuries. The system creates an order of treatment when there are multiple patients requiring care. Patients entering the ED at Level 1 or 2 receive the most immediate care. **Those triaged at Levels 3,4 and 5 may wait for care depending on the number of patients waiting for treatment. Urgent patients without life threatening events are still at risk for pressure injury development!**

Level 3's and 4's on the Emergency Room Scale are At Risk for Pressure Injuries

This patient population would benefit from the WAFFLE® Overlay and Cushion

Emergency Severity Index: ESI

1	Level 1 – Immediate: Life Threatening
2	Level 2 – Emergency: Could Be Life Threatening
3	Level 3 – Urgent: Not Life threatening
4	Level 4 – Semi Urgent: Not Life threatening
5	Level 5 – Non-Urgent: Treatment When Time Permits

Richard Wuerz, MD. David Eitel, MD

Those triaged at a level 5 typically walk in, unassisted with non-urgent conditions.

Urgent patients triaged as level 3 and 4, typically:

- Wait the longest in the ED before physicians decide to admit or discharge from the hospital.
- Could wait in the ED for 6 to 24 hours if beds aren't available
- Have quick changes in medical status
- May not receive skin assessments
- Are at-risk for pressure injury development

Early Intervention in the ED is Crucial



If beds are not available, these patients will become the **“boarder or holding patients”** and can remain in the ED greater than 6 hours up to 24 hours in some instances.

Early nursing interventions can prevent hospital acquired pressure injuries. **These patients NEED WAFFLE Cushions and Overlays.**

The incidence of PUs in the ED ranged from 0.38% to 19.1%¹



1. Peng, L., Wang-Qin, S., Hong-Lin, C. (2017) The Incidence of Pressure Ulcers in the Emergency Department: A Meta-analysis. Wounds