

# Eveander pillows; a medical device to prevent heel pressure ulcers and to provide support in the curative phase.

## Introduction

*“Pressure ulcers are a significant secondary health problem. Severely ill patients, patients with mobility disorders and others are at risk of developing immobility-related pressure ulcers in addition to the condition(s) they are being treated for. Pressure ulcers are an expensive complication and can have a significant negative impact on the lives of patients.*

*Taking appropriate measures can prevent many pressure ulcer lesions. While these measures may be time-consuming and expensive, they are most certainly worthwhile compared to the consequences of pressure ulcers. It is important to concentrate on measures that truly contribute to prevention rather than those that do not or actually worsen the situation.*

*Over the recent past, a great deal of research has been conducted in the field of pressure ulcer prevention. This research has produced meaningful answers to the questions about what should and should not be done. But not all has been addressed yet.” (Prof. M. Grypdonc, Belgian Pressure Ulcer Guidelines).*

After the coccyx, the heels are the most common anatomical location of pressure ulcers. The 2007 Dutch National Prevalence Survey of Care Problems (LPZ) showed that the average prevalence of heel pressure ulcers was 29.04%.

A review by Wong and Stotts in 2003 showed that elevation of the heel by means of a head pillow was the best-documented treatment. However, daily practice shows that head pillows are generally too thin to effectively elevate the heels and their use with feet is consid-

ered unhygienic when later they are re-used as head pillows. In addition, patients are often restless resulting in the displacement of the pillow or the lower leg sliding from the pillow.

## Objective

The development of a pillow that can permanently relieve the pressure exerted by the underlying surface on the heels in order to prevent heel pressure ulcers or to provide support in the curative phase.

## Method

The Tissue Viability Nurse in consultation with the occupation therapist made an inventory of the requirements that pillows should meet to deliver both optimal elevation of the heels and optimal attention to practical considerations, e.g. hygiene. A number of prototypes were then made followed by a decision on the pillow that was most adequate and met all requirements after an *in-vivo* test period of six weeks.

## Result

Eveander pillows measure 70x40x15 cm and have covers that make them easily distinguishable from head pillows through size and colour.

Eveander pillows regulate skin humidity and prevent sweatiness. For hygiene purposes, Eveander pillows are available both with and without separate pillow-cases. Their smooth top layer prevents friction and their filling has been designed to distribute the pressure.

Eveander pillows are available with prices starting from € 16. Eveander pillows are washable up to 95 degrees Celsius and can be used for a minimum of



Eveander pillow to prevent heel pressure ulcers. (27160862).

five years. Eveander pillows are easily positioned in beds.

## Discussion

Pressure ulcers continue to be a significant problem and the mobility and restlessness of some patients means that correctly lying on even this pillow is sometimes impossible. Proper attention should be paid to the proper positioning of the pillow when patients are repositioned. Patients with a history of hip surgery require additional attention to prevent dislocation of their new hip.

## Conclusion

Eveander pillows are pillows developed through the insight and knowledge of nurses and healthcare staff. The pressure ulcer problem has been recognised and an innovative cost-effective product has been developed. This aids the prevention of heel pressure ulcers and provides support in the treatment of patients with heel pressure ulcers. The pillow can be used both at home and in care institutions and will fit into all washing machines.

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