

# Sense the Urgency!

And Act to Prevent Pressure Wounds!



*It's been a crazy day in the PICU with a full load of patients for the staff. You are the only nurse in the entire house open for an admission when you get the news— a six year-old is being life-flighted in from a neighboring county. The child is an unrestrained passenger in a bad MVA. You are informed this child has multi-system trauma along with a serious head injury. The child is unresponsive and is currently intubated and requiring aggressive fluid resuscitation and pressors. You sense the urgency and serious nature of your patient's injuries. He will require the best of you and your team's assessment and intervention skills to survive.*

*As you prepare for his arrival, you begin thinking about the ABC's— airway, breathing and circulation. You get your room prepared to meet your patients most critical needs— oxygen, bag-mask, suction, ventilator, fluids, IV access supplies. Every base covered, every scenario reviewed. You and your colleagues are ready to go, ready for anything....Right?*

*But wait! Is there any room in this process to anticipate the needs of your patient when it comes to pressure wound prevention? You know that according to the **Braden Q** scale this patient is at **very high risk** for acquiring pressure wounds, due to his neuro status, immobility and cardiovascular instability. You also know that most **pressure wounds in the ICU setting occur in the first 12-24 hours from admission.***

*You place an air-overlay mattress over the existing mattress, knowing it's a start. You obtain gel-pads and pillows. You review your decision tree for wound prevention. Now, you are ready for anything.*

*It is a paradigm shift for most critical care nurses- to think about prevention of pressure wounds **before** the admission of a critically ill patient. We tend to focus on this area after a patient stabilizes, which can often be too late. We know from research findings that we can **greatly reduce the incidence of pressure wounds in our critically ill patients by intervening at admission.** So, the next time you find yourself facing the same situation as the nurse above, remember to....*

**Sense the Urgency and Act to prevent pressure wounds!**