

# Healing an Ischemic Ulcer (Pressure Ulcer) in a Seated Client.

## Clinical Case Study

### *Introduction*

*Providing pressure distribution and therapeutic healing for a seated client with an ischemic ulcer is an ongoing challenge for both wound care and seating professionals. Bed rest is not always possible or favorable, especially for active clients. The following case study involves the management of a recalcitrant ischemic ulcer in a young active paraplegic client.*

### *Background*

Mr. E. K. is a 31-year-old male with a history of a motor vehicle accident (1989) and subsequent T-4 paraplegia. He is continent of bowel and bladder, has poor skin integrity but is otherwise in good general health. He has a chronic subluxation of his left hip resulting in a left pelvic obliquity. E. K. works full time as an architect, and is extremely active in wheelchair racing, tennis and basketball. E. K. spends as much as 18 hours a day in his Shadow® rigid frame wheelchair, and is able to do an independent weight shift and transfer.

### *Management of Care*

E. K. sustained an ischemic ulcer (pressure ulcer) on his left ischial tuberosity, while sitting on a standard foam cushion. He underwent surgical debridement of the wound in December 1995.

E. K.'s physician then prescribed a myocutaneous flap rotation procedure. After the flap rotation, E. K. sat on a gel cushion. A small area of the ischemic ulcer, measuring 3.5 cm, remained open despite an aggressive wound care regimen and use of a gel cushion. In May 1996, E. K. was placed on the ROHO® DRY FLOATATION® HIGH PROFILE® QUADTRO® Cushion. E. K.'s ischemic ulcer healed to closure within three months, and the QUADTRO with ISOFLAP VALVE® was then utilized to address E. K.'s pelvic obliquity.



Figure 1. Failure for ischemic ulcer to heal.



Figure 2. Ischemic ulcer healed to closure.

## Conclusion

Ischemic ulcer management for full-time wheelchair users remains a daunting challenge. One of the most important considerations in the prevention and treatment of these wounds is the type of wheelchair cushion utilized. While spending up to 18 hours per day sitting in his wheelchair, E. K.'s ischemic ulcer healed to closure. The ROHO HIGH PROFILE QUADTRO cushion provided E. K. with a therapeutic environment and addressed his positioning needs simultaneously.

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