

ALPHA SOLUTIONS

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ALPHA TEKNIKO



Does The Perfect Healthcare Pillow Exist?

Hospitals and Long-Term care facilities do not spend much time thinking about their pillows, but maybe they should. After all, their patients and residents spend much of their day in bed with their pillow in constant close contact with their bodies. It has been widely reported that hotel guests consider clean, comfortable pillows a major determinant of their satisfaction, but healthcare facilities have even more complex requirements. Infection control and pressure ulcer prevention are two issues that few hotels consider but a healthcare facility cannot ignore.

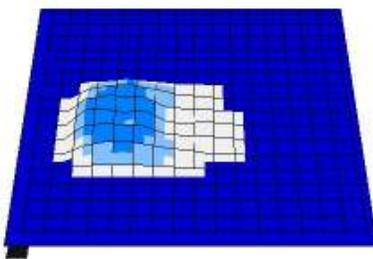
Infection control is a daily challenge for healthcare facilities. Pillows may contact non-intact skin which categorizes them as "semi critical" in the CDC's disinfection hierarchy. In any case they are often exposed to bodily fluids and discharges that can pose multiple problems including infection risk, foul odors and unpleasant appearance. This makes use of standard residential style pillows impractical even with regular laundering. Use of disposable pillows may seem to solve this but for patients with extended stays they can lose this advantage and require costly frequent replacement.

Pressure ulcer prevention is a growing concern that has enormous patient quality of life and facility cost containment implications (see statistics box). Treatment costs due to facility acquired pressure ulcers are no longer reimbursed by CMS to hospitals. Pressure ulcers are wounds that develop as a result of damage to the underlying tissues. While ears and the occipital region are not commonly known to be an area that is prone to pressure ulcers they make up 12-45% of the pressure ulcers on patients in published studies. Treating the cause is the key to reducing the incidence of pressure ulcers. Reducing pressure, moisture, shear and friction, and improving nutrition are fundamental to prevention and treatment of existing wounds.

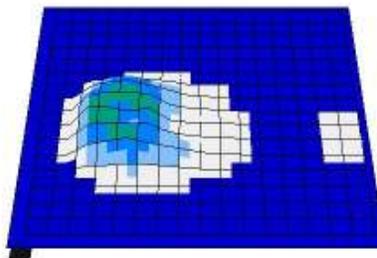
Urethane coating and antimicrobial treatments added to synthetic pillow fabrics can address infection control as they make it easy to disinfect a pillow. They can be repeatedly cleaned with most mild detergents or quaternary solutions and disinfected with diluted bleach. The antimicrobial treatment helps protect the pillow between cleanings. Until now, the synthetic fabric of choice was nylon, primarily because of its strength and durability. Alpha Tekniko's HealthCARE™ pillow utilizes this fabric and is a mainstay at many hospitals and long term care facilities.

Now, we are proud to introduce our SigmaCARE™ pillow featuring PolyStretch™ fabric to help prevent pressure ulcers while maintaining excellent infection control properties. SigmaCARE™ pillows are available in standard and Omega™ body pillow sizes. SigmaCARE™ pillows are also great for elevating pressure ulcer prone areas such as heels and elbows.

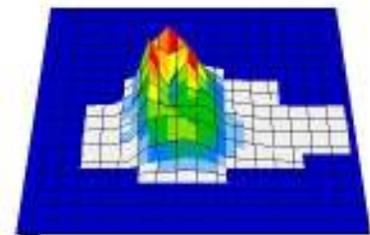
3D Pressure mapping illustrates the difference between various pillows



SigmaCARE™ with SigmaFILL™



HealthCARE™ with SigmaFILL™



Coated Nylon with Polyester Fill

What's inside matters as much as what is on the outside. SigmaFill™ is ideal for use in a healthcare environment. It is our proprietary high performance fill and is used in our HealthCARE™ and SigmaCARE™ pillows. Its unique structure micro-encapsulates 50,000 air cells in every cubic inch leaving the sleeper virtually floating on air. Plus, it will not flatten with use. It is the perfect complement to Polystretch™ fabric.

We hope that now that you have thought more about healthcare pillows you will take the next step and begin to treat a significant cause of pressure ulcers by asking for SigmaFill™ SigmaCARE™ and HealthCARE™ pillows from your healthcare distributor. Contact us for a sample and sourcing options in your area.

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We're on the web
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Statistics Box:

Nearly 60,000 people die each year in the USA as a result of pressure ulcers (Revis 2001)

60% of pressure ulcers develop in healthcare facilities (Evans 2001)

Of the 1.5 million US nursing home residents in 2004, about 159,000 (11%) had pressure ulcers. (NCHS 2004)

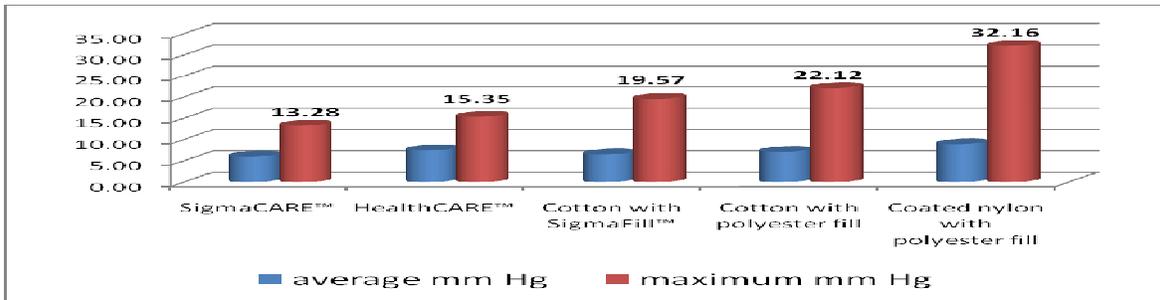
1.8 million Americans are annually afflicted with pressure ulcers at a treatment cost of \$1.3 billion (The National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel)

Among those patients developing a pressure ulcer in hospital more than half will die within the next twelve months. (Revis, 2001)

More than 17,000 lawsuits are related to pressure ulcers annually, the second most common claim after wrongful death and greater than falls or emotional distress (Leila C. Knox 2004; Mayo Foundation for Education and Research)

Individual settlements range from under \$50,000 to as much as \$4 million (Mayo Clinic Rochester Geriatric Medicine, Community Internal Medicine Division)

The Perfect Pillow Continues...



Pillow Pressure Map Data

Pillow	average mm Hg	maximum mm Hg
SigmaCARE™	6.02	13.28
HealthCARE™	7.46	15.35
Residential cotton with SigmaFill™	6.53	19.57
Residential cotton with polyester fill	7.13	22.12
Coated nylon with polyester fill	8.92	32.16

Pillow Type	Comfort	Pressure Redistri- bution	Cleanability & Infection Control	Durability & An- nual Cost
Residential style polyester/cotton	Excellent	Good	Poor	Poor
Disposable polyester	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Urethane coated nylon	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent
SigmaCARE™	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent