



# interRAI LTCF: Skin Condition (L1–L7)

The purpose of this job aid is to assist in completing sections L1 to L7 of the interRAI Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) assessment. These sections document the condition of the person’s skin, the presence and stage of pressure ulcers/injuries, and the presence of other skin conditions and foot problems.

For **L1 (Most Severe Pressure Ulcer)**, check for

- Any change in the feel of the tissue in a high-risk area;
- Any change in the appearance of the skin in high-risk areas, such as an “orange peel” look or a subtle purplish hue; and
- Extremely dry crust-like areas that, upon closer examination, are found to cover a tissue break.

A **pressure ulcer/injury** is any lesion caused by unrelieved pressure. Pressure ulcers usually occur over bony prominences and are staged to classify the degree of tissue damage observed.

For L1 (Most Severe Pressure Ulcer): Code the highest stage of pressure ulcers present in the last 3 days	
<b>Code 0</b>	<b>No pressure ulcer</b>
<b>Code 1</b>	<b>Any area of persistent skin redness:</b> An area of skin that appears continually reddened and does not disappear when pressure is relieved. There is no break in the skin. <b>Also known as “Stage 1.”</b>
<b>Code 2</b>	<b>Partial loss of skin layers:</b> A partial-thickness loss of skin that presents clinically as an abrasion, blister, or shallow crater. <b>Also known as “Stage 2.”</b>
<b>Code 3</b>	<b>Deep craters in the skin:</b> A full thickness of skin is lost, exposing the subcutaneous tissues. Presents as a deep crater with or without undermining of adjacent tissue. <b>Also known as “Stage 3.”</b>
<b>Code 4</b>	<b>Breaks in skin exposing muscle or bone:</b> A full thickness of skin and subcutaneous tissue is lost, exposing muscle or bone. <b>Also known as “Stage 4.”</b>
<b>Code 5</b>	<b>Not codeable:</b> For example, because necrotic eschar is predominant.

## Coding examples for L1 (Most Severe Pressure Ulcer)

If the person has a Stage 4 pressure ulcer/injury and an unstageable pressure ulcer/injury, code L1 as 5 (Not codeable).

If a pressure ulcer/injury was originally Stage 4 but has shown improvement to a partial thickness loss of skin layers during the observation period, code L1 as 2 (Partial loss of skin layers).

If a pressure ulcer/injury has a scab on it, code L1 as 2 (Partial loss of skin layers) if it is not necrotic. If necrotic eschar is present, prohibiting accurate staging, code L1 as 5 (Not codeable) until the eschar has been debrided (surgically or mechanically) to allow staging.



# Job Aid

**L2 (Prior Pressure Ulcer)** — code as 1 (Yes) if there is a history of pressure ulcers now healed. A history of pressure ulcers is a risk factor for the development of pressure ulcers in the future.

**L3 (Presence of Skin Ulcer Other Than Pressure Ulcer)** identifies the presence of any skin ulcer that is not a pressure ulcer (e.g., venous ulcer, arterial ulcer, mixed venous-arterial ulcer, diabetic foot ulcer).

**L4 (Major Skin Problems)** includes lesions, second- or third-degree burns and healing surgical wounds. For burns, the effect of the injury may be local or systemic.

**L5 (Skin Tears or Cuts [Other Than Surgery])** includes any traumatic break in the skin penetrating to the subcutaneous tissue. Does not include surgical incisions.

**L6 (Other Skin Conditions or Changes in Skin Condition)** documents the presence of skin problems other than ulcers, skin tears or cuts and the major skin problems represented in L1 to L5. For example, look for bruises, rashes, intertrigo, mottling and eczema. **Do not** include pressure ulcers, skin tears or cuts, lesions, burns or healing surgical wounds.

**L7 (Foot Problems)** includes bunions, hammertoes, overlapping toes, structural problems, infections and ulcers. This item does not include muscle spasms.

For L7 (Foot Problems): Code for the appropriate response	
Code 0	No foot problems
Code 1	Foot problems, no limitation in walking
Code 2	Foot problems limit walking
Code 3	Foot problems prevent walking
Code 4	Foot problems, does not walk for other reasons

### Notes

If a pressure ulcer/injury occurs on the foot, code **both** L1 (Most Severe Pressure Ulcer) and L7 (Foot Problems).

A complete or partial foot amputation and contractures are considered structural foot problems and therefore are captured in L7 (Foot Problems).



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