

Guide to conducting a 'bottoming-out' test

'Bottoming out' describes a situation in which a pressure-reducing surface does not provide adequate support, causing the weight of the person lying on top to be transferred to the bed base.

As weight distribution varies from patient to patient (some are heavier in the buttock region than people of similar weight), it is good clinical practice to check any alternating pressure reducing mattress for 'bottoming-out', with patient in both a lying (supine) and seated (Fowlers) position.

A bottoming out test involves placing your hand underneath your patient to check for

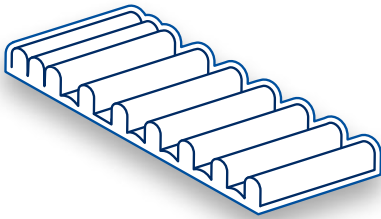
adequate support and suspension. This test should be performed when a patient is placed on an alternating pressure mattress for or whenever the patient is moved into an inclined position for the first time.

When placing your hand underneath the patient, we recommend the use of a low friction product such as Multiglide Gloves.

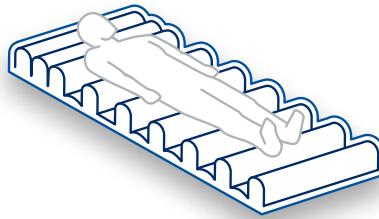


How to conduct a 'bottoming-out' test:

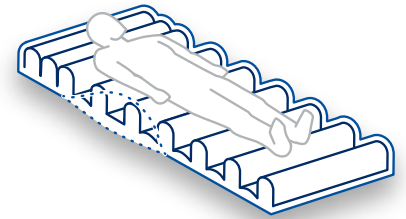
- 1 Ensure mattress is fully inflated and alternating. Set pressure level to most appropriate for patient's weight.



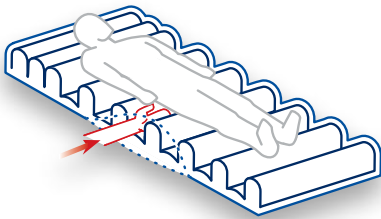
- 2 Lie patient flat on mattress, face up or on side.



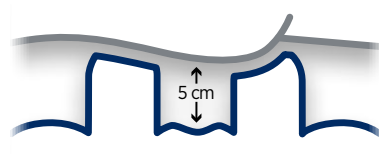
- 3 Unzip one side of top cover, about two thirds down or just below the buttock area. Fold back cover until cells are visible.



- 4 Aligned with the cells positioned beneath hip and buttock region, find a deflating cell – a cell that is softer to the touch.



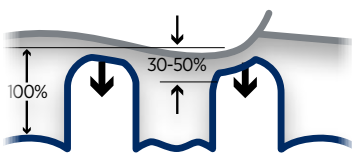
- 5 Slide your hand underneath the patient, pushing down on the top of the deflated cell – your hand should easily slide between patient and mattress base, (approximately 5 cm of clearance or roughly wrist height).



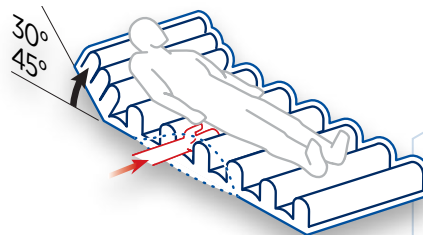
- 6 If your hand is difficult to insert, or drags on buttock, there is insufficient mattress pressure. Increase pressure setting and wait 10 minutes to repeat step 5.



- 7 If clearance between patient and base exceeds wrist height, check patient is immersed at least 30-50% into fully inflated cells. If not, decrease pressure setting and wait 10 minutes to repeat step 5.



- 8 If patient is adequately supported, raise the bed backrest to a 30° angle (semi-Fowlers position) and then a 45° angle (Fowlers position) and repeat step 5. Set and forget.



- 9 Rezip cover once testing is complete.

