

Alternating-pressure mattresses



Photo: Drive DeVilbiss Healthcare

Snapshot

Highest priced unit:	\$3,500
Mid-range priced unit:	\$1,548
Lowest priced unit:	\$1,266

Pricing Trends

2013-2014: Flat to +3%

2014-2015: Flat

2015-2016: 1-2%

Typical delivery time: As quick as same-day

Typical delivery charges: Cost of freight; usually some offer free shipping.

Average life span of product: 3 to 5 years

Standard warranty: 1 to 3 years

Extended warranty: Up to 15 years

Average maintenance cost per year: Make sure to budget annually for a new pump

(Figures cited are averages of all respondents' answers. Actual pricing will vary due to volume, bundling and other factors of a purchase.)

Sources: Drive Medical, Geriatric Medical, Hill-Rom, Roscoe Medical

FROM THE FRONT LINES:

"Alternating pressure mattresses are a staple. They work wonders for individuals who have frail skin to keep them from developing pressure ulcers or to help with healing. The movement from the continuously flowing air also works well for patients between the regular offloading we do. These types of mattresses also wick away moisture from perspiration as an additional tool for the staff to make sure residents stay dry and comfortable."

Barbara Quinn, RN, BSN, WCC, Manager of the Treatment Team at Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital, Baltimore

Buyer Notes

- Ask about rental versus purchasing options, as well as whether the mattress includes an alarm system and power outage protection.
- Using the mattress backfires if the wrong chucks (also called bed pads or mattress protectors) are put underneath. Make sure they are breathable.
- The market is changing due to more demand in home health, and for caregivers who want advanced models, one vendor advised. Providers should look at weight limits.
- Some of the pumps are louder than others. The hose connector that plugs into the pump can be one cause of noise.

**For a list of vendors go to the:
RESIDENT CARE section, pages 135, 147-148, 156**