Ask surgical professionals to name the most important advances of the last 5 years and most will say 4K video, lasers or maybe the use of robots. Although these are groundbreaking advancements in healthcare, the product that has changed patient outcomes for our service is none of the above. It's a seemingly simple set of single use pads and positioners called Surgical BackPacks.

Trust me; if you do prone positioning, it is a flat-out game-changer. Trial it. You’ll see.

At our hospital, we do about 60 neuro cases a week, with many in prone position. Pressure injuries can often be a big problem with this group. The cases are time intensive. Comorbidities are common, and the OR environment can be unfriendly to the skin.

For years, the tools we had to help us were limited. We had table covers designed to protect the equipment, not necessarily the patient, and low-tech foam pads inappropriate for prolonged skin contact. Back then, it was not uncommon to see one to two pressure-related events per week, such as abdominal skin tears, persistent erythema and/or blisters.

Then, two years ago, we had an opportunity to trial Xodus Medical Surgical BackPacks. That’s when our skin integrity outcomes began to improve.

BackPacks are extremely convenient custom kits for prone positioning. Each one includes a slotted headrest, two armboards, four hip/knee pads and a special abdominal pad that allows for chest and diaphragm expansion. But BackPacks are not only great for the safety of our patients. They are financially beneficial. The price is competitive, but more importantly it saves us on the back end. The average cost of caring for a Stage III or IV pressure ulcer is $43,180, and CMS no longer pays for that. Preventing even one ulcer makes it all worthwhile.

As a bonus, because BackPacks contain everything we need in one vacuum-packed bag, it saves us a minimum of 5 minutes every case, and frequently more, increasing staff satisfaction.

Every day, in surgery facilities everywhere, patients sustain pressure injuries. We can do better. Our experience proves that. If you do prone positioning and you have pressure injuries, I encourage you to consider the Xodus Medical Surgical BackPack™. Your patients will thank you.

Ms. Kramer is Director of the Neurosurgery Surgical Division of a large level 1 trauma center in Pittsburgh, Pa.