**Triage of war-related injured patients: Experiences from the Second Gulf war**

Fikri Abu-Zidan, Imad Ayyash, and Sami Aman

1. The Research Office, College of Medicine and Health Sciences, UAE University, Al-Ain UAE.

2. Department of Surgery, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Teaching Hospital, Kuwait

**Introduction:** Triage is an essential part of disaster management that affects its outcome.

**Objectives:** We aimed to compare two triage methods and their effects on missed injuries during the Second Gulf War.

**Patients and methods:** The triage system of Mubarak Al-Kabeer teaching Hospital in the first day of the Second Gulf war (2nd August 1990) was different compared with its last day. It consisted in the first day of field triage in front of the hospital and medical triage within the hospital. Three experienced general surgeons performed the field triage. The man power became less with time. The triage at the last day of the war (26th February 1991) was only an in hospital triage performed in the Emergency Department by a urologist who had previous experience in General surgery while experienced surgeons were operating. Data regarding missed injuries were retrieved from the Gulf War Injury Database which was retrospectively collected.

**Results:** Missed injuries in the triaged admitted patients on the last day of the war was significantly more than the missed injuries of the triaged admitted patients on the first day of the war (1/80 compared with 5/30, p < 0.01, Fisher’s Exact test).

**Conclusions:** Triage should be performed by the most expereinced surgeon. Adding a field triage in front of the hospital is useful in improving the triage process.

**Key words:** Triage, war, injury