**Effects of the Second Gulf War on the mechanism of vascular injuries**

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**Introduction:** Wars have long term effects in conflict areas. This includes the post-war change in the mechanism of injury.

**Objectives:** We aimed to study the effects of Second Gulf War on the pattern of the mechanism of vascular injuries in Kuwait.

**Methods:** Vascular injuries treated at Mubarak Al-Kabeer teaching Hospital, Kuwait, during the pre-war period of 1984-1990 was compared with published data of vascular injures of the war period (1990-1991) and post war period (1991-1995).

**Results:** There were 44 pre-war vascular injuries (7.3 cases/year) compared with 36 cases treated during the war (36 cases/ year) and 155 cases treated after the war (19.4 cases/year). The percentage of intentional vascular injuries before the war was 4.6% (2/44), all were stab wounds, compared with 100% during the war, 94.4% due to firearms and blast injuries, and 5.6% due to stab wounds. After the war, intentional vascular injuries were 43.2% of all vascular injuries (67/155), 34.1% were due to stab wounds and 11.1% were due to firearms and blast injuries. This change was highly significant (p < 0.0001, Fisher’s Exact test).

**Conclusions:** Wars have long term effects on behaviour of the population increasing the interpersonal violence. Availability of weapons in the hands of civilians increases intentional penetrating trauma

**Key words:** war, vascular injuires, violence, penetrating trauma.