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SOFT TISSUE INJURIES IN FIELD SETTINGS

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The soft tissue injuries rate is progressively increasing since world wars till the present peace-enforcing mission in Afghanistan (60-90%).

The mechanism of tissue damage is due to bullets, improvised explosives devices, primary or secondary missiles and incendiary munitions.

Ballistic, thermal and blast injuries inflict devastating limbs damage, lacerating soft tissue, bone and neurovascular structures.

The Italian Army field organization is composed of mobile hospitals that are shared in Role activities according to the level of health assistance.

The targets of the Role 1 hospital are rescue, life saving treatment and evacuation; the Role 2 duty is reanimation, stabilization, emergency surgery and evacuation. Role 3 hospital is equipped to perform specialized surgery, high diagnostic examination and evacuation. The Italian Role 4 is represented by the Rome Army Military Hospital.

The goal in treatment of soft tissue wounds is to save lives, preserve function, minimize morbidity and prevent infections, through early and aggressive surgical wound care far forward on the battlefield.

Despite advances in complex wound management, appropriate timing of soft tissue injuries treatment still remains subjective, but the six pillars of warfare wound care are:

1. Correct irrigation
2. Foreign material removal
3. Devitalized tissue debridement
4. Prolonged disinfection
5. Suitable dressing
6. Splint for transport.