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Teaching acute trauma management to medical students

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Medical students may believe that Acute Trauma Management is the last thing they need to learn but in conflict and disaster zones, medical students play an important role in the trauma team. Rather than simply taking blood, fetching equipment and assisting in the transportation of patients, students need to understand trauma as a disease and the principles and practice of Acute Trauma Care. As part of their surgical rotation, medical students at Ziv Medical Center spend time in the trauma room learning, how monitoring and ventilation equipment works, how to connect these correctly, how to administer oxygen, work the suction, intubate, obtain venous access, apply limb splints and pelvic binders and to lead their own student teams (in turns) in trauma management for one hour drills twice weekly. These drills complement tutorials they have in trauma care (including molecular mechanisms) as part of their surgical teaching. At the end of the rotation, they have an examination in the trauma room (assessed drills which they take turns to lead) as well as a written and oral examination in trauma care and surgery. Some of the students work as paramedics, some as physician assistants, and on qualification in two years time, of course, as doctors. This training is vital to them, builds their confidence, enables them to participate fully in the resuscitation of trauma and critically ill septic patients or patients with massive gastrointestinal or obstetric haemorrhage. Students understand exactly what decisions are taken by seniors in the trauma room and why.

Biography

Wisam Matanis is a surgical resident in Ziv Medical Center. He gained his basic Medical degree from the Technion- Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel. In addition to training in operative surgery, he has an active interest in undergraduate teaching and research.

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