
**OTOLARYNGOLOGY/HEAD AND NECK SURGERY
COMBAT CASUALTY CARE IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM
AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM**



The Coat of Arms
1818
Medical Department of the Army

A 1976 etching by Vassil Ekimov of an
original color print that appeared in
The Military Surgeon, Vol XLI, No 2, 1917

This textbook is dedicated, by the editors and authors, to those brave women and men of the US and Allied military forces who voluntarily chose to serve their country by placing themselves in harm's way. Many of them were grievously injured on the field of battle and now face a more difficult life dealing with the aftermath of these serious injuries—yet, they do so with courage and without regret. All of the surgeons who participated in this textbook realize that the true heroes, the individuals to be admired and praised, were our patients and their supportive families. Our thoughts and prayers will always be with them.

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Black Hawk helicopter landing at the Air Force Theater Hospital in Balad, Iraq (November 2004).

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Foreword

The incidence of head and neck injuries in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom is double the incidence historically seen during previous conflicts. Airway compromise, primarily due to these head and neck injuries, continues to be either the second or the third leading cause of potentially survivable death on the battlefield for our Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Airmen. Consequently, this textbook is a compendium of 48 chapters written by 34 combat surgeons who have deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, or both war zones. These evidence-based lessons learned have saved lives and will save lives in future conflicts.

The goal of this text is to impart these lessons learned to future military and civilian head and neck surgeons. If we are successful, then in future conflicts we will achieve or surpass our current historically high combat survival rates at the outset of fighting, based, at least partially, on these lessons learned.

Patricia D. Horoho
Lieutenant General, US Army
The Surgeon General and
Commanding General
US Army Medical Command

Washington, DC
January 2015

Preface

More than 7,000 American service members and tens of thousands of Iraqis and Afghanis have suffered head and neck wounds during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The authors of this textbook have personally treated the majority of these injuries over the past 12 years. Consequently, the goal of this trauma textbook is to impart the lessons learned during the treatment of these devastating injuries to our military and civilian colleagues. It is our sacred duty to ensure that these lessons paid for in blood are used to improve the survival of head and neck injured patients in the next inevitable conflict.

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