The term “medical treatment” refers to the treatment that must be provided for wounded and sick persons who do not (i.e. civilians \[1\]) or no longer (i.e. wounded, sick \[2\] and shipwrecked \[3\], combatants \[4\], prisoners of war \[5\]) participate in the hostilities \[6\] of an armed conflict. Such treatment is provided by medical personnel \[7\] and must be delivered without adverse distinction \[8\] and with the least possible delay. To guarantee the delivery of medical treatment, medical personnel and medical objects \[9\] are specially protected from attack \[10\] and can be identified by the distinctive emblems \[11\].

IHL prohibits carrying out procedures and medical experiments \[12\] on wounded and sick, or other protected persons \[13\] that are not required to restore them back to health.

See Medical personnel \[7\]; Medical ethics/medical duties \[14\]; Medical objects \[9\]; Adverse distinction \[8\]; Wounded and sick \[2\]; Civilians \[1\]; Shipwrecked \[15\];

**CASES**

Health Care in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas \[16\]

Syrian Statement at the UN on the Medical Treatment of Enemy Fighters \[17\]

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health
Afghanistan, Attack on Kunduz Trauma Centre [19]

Thailand, Attack on Hospital [20]

UN, Security Council Resolution 2286 on Attacks on Hospitals [21]

Yemen, Potential Existence and Effects of Naval Blockade [22]

Israel/Palestine, Accountability for the Use of Lethal Force [23]

Syria: Medical support for ISIS [24]

LEGAL SOURCE

of wounded, sick and shipwrecked

GCI, 12 [25] (see ICRC updated Commentary [28])

GCII, 12 [27] (see ICRC updated Commentary [28]) and 14 [29] (see ICRC updated Commentary [30])

GCIII, 30 [31]

GCIV, 57 [32]

PI, 14 [33]
of POWs

GCIII, 13\[36\]–16 \[37\], 20/2 \[38\], 30 \[31\], 46/3 \[39\], 54/2 \[40\], 98/4 \[41\], 108/3 \[42\]

of civilian internees

GCIV, 81 \[43\], 91 \[44\], 95/4 \[45\], 127/2 \[46\]

of protected persons

GCIV, 32 \[47\], 38/2 \[48\]

Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/medical-treatment

Links
[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/civilians
[8] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/adverse-distinction
[10] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/attacks
[12] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/experiments
[15] https://casebook.icrc.org/node/20515%60
[31] https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=7C1C1F476E44C713C12563CD0051ACEC
[34] https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=2739F5E7A6BD992CC12563CD0051E826
[38]