Persons, whether military or civilian, who because of trauma, disease or other physical or mental disorder or disability are in need of medical care and who refrain from any act of hostility.

For the purposes of protection, these terms also cover maternity cases, new-born babies and other persons who may be in need of immediate medical assistance or care, such as the infirm or expectant mothers, and who refrain from any act of hostility.

They must be respected and protected in accordance with international humanitarian law. The general principle governing treatment of the wounded and sick of any party to the conflict is that they must be treated humanely and given, to the fullest extent practicable and with the least possible delay, the medical care required by their condition.

There must be no distinction among them founded on any grounds other than medical ones.

See Shipwrecked [1];
GCI, 12 [3] (see ICRC updated Commentary [4]) 18 [5] (see ICRC updated Commentary [6])

GCII, 12 [7] (see ICRC updated Commentary [8]) 21 [9] (see ICRC updated Commentary [10])

PI, 8 [11]-11 [12]

PII, 7 [13]-8 [14]

CIHL, Rules 109 [15]-111 [16]

**CASES**

Netherlands, *In re Pilz* [17]

Israel, The Rafah Case (Paras. 40-44.) [18]

ICRC/Lebanon, Sabra and Chatila [19]


ICRC, Iran/Iraq, Memoranda [21]

Iraq, Care for Wounded Enemies [22]

Armed Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (Para. 3) [23]
Afghanistan, Separate Hospital Treatment for Men and Women [24]


Gaza: Health situation in the Gaza Strip [26]

Yemen, Obstructing Medical Care [27]

South Sudan: Medical Care Under Fire [28]

Health Care in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas [29]

Democratic Republic of Congo, Fighting with the M 23 Group [30]

Syrian Statement at the UN on the Medical Treatment of Enemy Fighters [31]

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health [32]

UN, Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit [33]

Afghanistan, Attack on Kunduz Trauma Centre [34]

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Israel/Palestine, Accountability for the Use of Lethal Force [37]

South Sudan, Attack in Malakal UN Protection Site [38]

Syria: Medical support for ISIS [39]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

Suggested reading:


Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/wounded-and-sick

Links
[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/shipwrecked
[38] https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/south-sudan-attack-malakal-un-protection-site