**1. Introduction to TCCC**

Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) is the standard of care in battlefield prehospital medicine. If you have not been trained in TCCC, then your previous medical training may not have contained the material presented in the following lessons. Medical care in combat is significantly different than that provided on the streets of Anywhere, USA.

**2. Disclaimer**

*The opinions or assertions contained herein are the private views of the authors and are not to be construed as official or as reflecting the views of the Departments of the Army, Air Force, Navy, or the Department of Defense.*

There are no conflict of interest disclosures.

**3. Learning Objectives**

- **IDENTIFY** the three objectives of TCCC.
- **DESCRIBE** the key factors influencing combat casualty care.
- **IDENTIFY** the evidence that documents the lifesaving impact of TCCC use.
- **DESCRIBE** the three phases of care in TCCC.
- **IDENTIFY** the most common causes of preventable death among combat casualties.

Read the text.
4. TCCC

What is TCCC and Why Do I Need to Learn about it??

Military units that have trained all of their members in TCCC have documented the lowest incidence of preventable deaths among their casualties in the history of modern warfare.

TCCC is now used by all services in the U.S. Military and many allied nations as well to care for their combat wounded. TCCC-based prehospital trauma training is now becoming widespread in the US civilian sector as well.

5. Trauma Care: Military vs Civilian

- Prehospital trauma care is very different in the military vs the civilian settings.
- TCCC was developed to address these differences.
- Military units that have trained all unit members in TCCC have achieved the lowest incidence of preventable combat deaths in history.
- TCCC has now been made the standard for the US military and TCCC training is required for everyone in the Department of Defense.
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<th>7.</th>
<th><strong>Trauma Care Setting</strong></th>
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<td>If you are injured and taken to a civilian trauma center, you will be treated by a skilled team of medical professionals using the latest technology and working in a well-lighted, climate-controlled, secure area. What about trauma that occurs in a tactical combat setting?</td>
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<th>8.</th>
<th><strong>Tactical Trauma Care Setting – Shrapnel Wound in the Hindu Kush</strong></th>
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<td>This is a good example of where the combat corpsmen and medics live and practice. This picture was taken at about 10,000 feet altitude in the Hindu Kush mountains in Afghanistan. The wound is a shrapnel wound of the hip. In this setting, care is much more difficult. Common sense tells you that the management plan will need to be different here. TCCC helps to define how it’s different.</td>
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<th><strong>Battlefield Trauma Care Prior to 9/11</strong></th>
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<td>These are the training programs that are used to teach trauma care in the civilian community. They are all EXCELLENT training programs. However, they are designed for the civilian trauma setting - the principles they reflect often need to be modified for the tactical setting. Emerging civilian guidelines/programs are only recently beginning to address providing care in conjunction with an ongoing threat.</td>
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- Combat medical training historically was modeled on civilian courses.
  - Emergency Medical Technician
  - Advanced Trauma Life Support
- We trained to the standard of care in non-tactical (civilian) settings.
- Tactical factors were not considered.
Battlefield Trauma Care: 2001

- Based on trauma courses NOT developed for combat
- Medics taught NOT to use tourniquets
- No hemostatic agents
- No junctional tourniquets
- Large volume crystalloid fluid resuscitation for shock
- Civil War-vintage technology for battlefield analgesia (IM morphine)
- SOF medics – IV cutdowns for difficult venous access
- No tactical context for the care rendered
- 2 large bore IVs on all casualties with significant trauma
- No focus on prevention of trauma-related coagulopathy
- Heavy emphasis on endotracheal intubation

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Read the text.

Show of hands – how many people in the audience were trained on these concepts of care?

Tourniquets: The Primary Driver for TCCC

“The striking feature was to see healthy young Americans with a single injury of the distal extremity arrive at the magnificently equipped field hospital, usually within hours, but dead on arrival. In fact, there were 193 deaths due to wounds of the upper and lower extremities, … of the 2600.”

CAPT J.S. Maughon
Mil Med 1970

- Extremity hemorrhage math in Vietnam: 193 of 2600 = 7.4% x 46,233 fatalities = 3,421 preventable US deaths from extremity hemorrhage

3,421 is a staggering number when all these deaths were potentially preventable. How would a Medical Center react if you had a meningitis or a pyelonephritis patient come in and you didn’t get around to starting antibiotics and the patient died?
### Different Trauma Requires Different Care Strategies

- It is intuitive that combat and civilian trauma are different, BUT…
- It is difficult to devise and implement needed changes.
- No one group of medical professionals has all the necessary skills and experience.
- Trauma docs and combat medical personnel have different skill sets. Both are needed to optimize battlefield trauma care strategies.
- Tourniquets are one striking example of how battlefield trauma care has sometimes been slow to change.

TCCC principles are now determined by physicians and combat medical personnel working as a team. In the past, the failure of these two groups to communicate well slowed the implementation of critical trauma care measures. We will look at a dramatic example of this.

### Prehospital Trauma Care: Military vs. Civilian

- Hostile fire
- Darkness
- Environmental extremes
- Different wounding epidemiology
- Limited equipment
- Need for tactical maneuver
- Long delays to hospital care
- Different medic training and experience

What factors must we think about when defining combat trauma care?

### Tactical Combat Casualty Care in Special Operations

In the mid-90s, the Special Operations medical community began looking for some better answers for combat trauma and Tactical Combat Casualty Care was born. TCCC has always focused on the most common causes of preventable death on the battlefield. The common causes of preventable death from combat trauma are shown in the following slides.
15. **Extremity Hemorrhage**

Here is a classic example of a preventable cause of death - arterial hemorrhage from a leg wound, in this case, a pig. **Forget about the “Golden Hour” – bleeding like this will kill you in a few minutes.** If no one controls this type of bleeding in a casualty, that casualty is going to die very quickly.

Click on the photo to play the video.

16. **Junctional Hemorrhage**

These types of wounds are often caused by IEDs and may result in junctional hemorrhage.

Junctional hemorrhage (bleeding from wounds where the limbs or neck join the trunk) is another common cause of preventable death on the battlefield.

17. **Tension Pneumothorax**

This X-ray shows a tension pneumothorax, which, in combat, is usually secondary to a penetrating injury to the chest. This condition may be quickly fatal if not identified and treated. **Tension pneumothorax is the SECOND LEADING cause of preventable death on the battlefield after hemorrhage.**
Deaths from airway trauma are a small percentage of combat fatalities, but many of these deaths are preventable. If the casualty is conscious, he will instinctively protect his own airway. While this patient has a significant injury to his airway, he is able to breathe on his own reasonably well if he is sitting up and leaning forward. This casualty survived and did well after reconstructive surgery. Could you lay this casualty down on a litter on his back to transport him? Probably a bad idea - all that blood and mucus would funnel right into his airway.

The ongoing mission does not stop just because there is a casualty. The 3 objectives of TCCC are to provide lifesaving care to the injured combatant, to limit the risk of taking further casualties, and to enable the unit to achieve mission success.

The DoD has a group with a charter to keep the TCCC Guidelines updated.
Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care

- The prehospital arm of the Joint Trauma System
- 42 members from all services in the DoD and civilian sector
- Trauma Surgeons, Emergency Medicine, and Critical Care physicians, combatant unit physicians; medical educators; combat medics, corpsmen, and PJs
- 100% deployed experience as of 2018
- Meet periodically; update TCCC as needed

Battlefield Trauma Care Today

- Phased care in TCCC
- Aggressive use of tourniquets in CUF
- Combat Gauze as hemostatic agent
- Aggressive needle thoracostomy
- Sit up and lean forward airway positioning
- Surgical airways for maxillofacial trauma
- Hypotensive resuscitation with blood products
- IVs only when needed/IO access if required
- PO meds, OTFC, ketamine as “Triple Option” for battlefield analgesia
- Hypothermia prevention; avoid NSAIDs
- Battlefield antibiotics
- Tranexamic acid
- Junctional Tourniquets/XStat/Pelvic binding

TCCC: How Do We Know That It’s Working?

One way to assess the impact of TCCC is to examine the results attained when the guidelines are put into practice.
### TCCC Early in the Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts

- NOT widely used at the start of the wars
- Increased use by both Special Operations and conventional units beginning in 2005
- The Drivers:
  - Early reports of success with TCCC, especially TQs
  - USAISR tourniquet study by Walters et al (2005)
  - USSOCOM TCCC message - March 2005
  - USCENTCOM tourniquet and hemostatic agents (HemCon) message - 2005

Even though recommended in the TCCC guidelines, there were few tourniquets on the battlefield before 2005. Some were homemade; some were commercially manufactured. The performance of these tourniquets was variable. Tourniquet implementation was not gradual from the start. It happened through a series of discrete events, starting with an ISR study identifying the best tourniquets.

### Preventable Combat Deaths from Not Using Tourniquets

  - 193 of 2,600
  - 7.4% of total combat fatalities
  - 77 of 982 (in both cohorts of fatalities)
  - 7.8% of total fatalities – no better than Vietnam
- Tourniquets became widely used in 2005-2006
  - Eastridge – *J Trauma* 2012: OEF + OIF (to Jun 2011)
    - 119 of 4,596
    - 2.6% of total fatalities – a 67% decrease

Once limb tourniquets were broadly trained, distributed, and used, their efficacy became apparent. Before limb tourniquets were widely used on the battlefield, more than 7% of combat fatalities were due to extremity hemorrhage that could have been controlled by a tourniquet. After tourniquets became widely used on the battlefield, deaths due to extremity hemorrhage fell to 2.6%.
### Tourniquet Outcomes in TCCC Transition Initiative Report

- **Sixty-seven successful tourniquet applications identified in 2005 and 2006**
- **No avoidable loss of limbs due to tourniquet use identified**

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The USSOCOM TCCC Transition Initiative was a program that provided just-in-time TCCC training and equipage to Special Operations forces about to deploy. It included an after-action analysis of trauma care delivered during the unit’s deployment. Early indications were that limb tourniquets were effective at controlling extremity hemorrhage, and were also safe.

### TCCC: Success in Combat 3rd Infantry Division

"The adoption and implementation of the principles of TCCC by the medical platoon of TF 1-15 IN in OIF 1 resulted in overwhelming success. Over 25 days of continuous combat with 32 friendly casualties, many of them serious, we had 0 KIAs and 0 Died From Wounds, while simultaneously caring for a significant number of Iraqi civilian and military casualties."

Read the text.

### Tourniquets – Kragh et al: Two Landmark Papers

- **Published in 2008/2009**
- **Tourniquets are saving lives on the battlefield**
- **31 lives saved in 6 months by tourniquets**
- **Author estimated 2000 lives saved with tourniquets in this conflict up to that date (2009)**
- **No arms or legs lost because of tourniquet use**

**COL Kragh and his colleagues examined battlefield limb tourniquet use, and compiled the two most important tourniquet papers ever published. The most important lesson from these papers was that when a tourniquet is needed, it should be applied AS SOON AS POSSIBLE because survival is improved when hemorrhagic shock is prevented.**

**NOBODY is arguing about whether tourniquets save lives any more.**
### Eliminating Preventable Death on the Battlefield

- TCCC in the 75th Ranger Regiment
- All Rangers and docs trained in TCCC
- Ranger preventable death incidence: **3%**
- Overall U.S. military preventable deaths: **24%**

The Army Rangers have achieved the lowest preventable death rate ever reported in a major conflict. They did it by training **everyone** in TCCC, not just their medics. Their success in eliminating preventable combat deaths is remarkable.

### What Do the Soldiers Say?

A recent U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command survey of Soldiers in combat units found that **TCCC is the second most valued element** of their training, exceeded only by training in the use of their individual weapons.

Medics and doctors are not the only ones who appreciate the life-saving potential of TCCC practiced by every member of the unit. Non-medical combatants trained in TCCC recognize the possibility that it may enable them to save their own lives or the lives of their wounded teammates.

### TCCC in Canadian Forces

**Conclusion:**

“For the first time in decades, the CF has been involved in a war in which its members have participated in sustained combat operations and have suffered increasingly severe injuries. Despite this, the CF experienced the highest casualty survival rate in history. Though this success is multifactorial, the determination and resolve of CF leadership to develop and deliver comprehensive, multileveled TCCC packages to soldiers and medics is a significant reason for that and has unquestionably saved the lives of Canadian, Coalition and Afghan Security Forces...”

Canadian Forces also train medics and non-medics in TCCC. Savage and others reporting on the implementation of TCCC in the Canadian Forces gave much of the credit for the highest casualty survival rate in their history to TCCC training.
| 32. | **Limb Tourniquets in the U.S. Military**  
In 2001, almost nobody in the U.S. Military had a tourniquet.  
In 2018, thanks to TCCC, no American Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine goes onto the battlefield without a tourniquet. | **Limb Tourniquets in the U.S. Military**  
In 2001, almost nobody in the U.S. Military had a tourniquet.  
In 2018, thanks to TCCC, no American Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine goes onto the battlefield without a tourniquet. | Because limb tourniquets have been so effective at controlling extremity hemorrhage, and because they have proven safe when properly applied and monitored, they have become standard battlefield issue. |
| 33. | **Hartford Consensus**  
2 April 2013  
- Working group organized by American College of Surgeons Board of Regents and FBI  
- In response to Sandy Hook shootings  
- Excerpt from findings: Life threatening injuries in active shooter incidents such as those in Fort Hood, Tucson, and Aurora are similar to those encountered in combat settings. Military experience has shown that the number one cause of preventable death in victims of penetrating trauma is hemorrhage. Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) programs, when implemented with strong leadership support, have produced dramatic reductions in preventable death. Recognizing that active shooter incidents can occur in any community, the Hartford Consensus encourages the use of existing techniques and equipment validated by over a decade of well-documented clinical evidence. | **Hartford Consensus**  
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The life-saving lessons learned from TCCC are being adopted into civilian trauma care. |
| 34. | **ASDHA TCCC Letter**  
14 February 2014  
In February 2014, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs gave notice that uniform TCCC training would be directed throughout the Department. | **ASDHA TCCC Letter**  
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| 35. | General Mattis letter to Service Chiefs  
Written during his time as CENTOM Commander  
Highlights Ranger success with TCCC  
Stresses importance of TCCC training | When Secretary Mattis was CENTCOM Commander, be recognized that TCCC as practiced by the Rangers saves lives…. |   |
| 36. | Secretary of Defense James Mattis |   |   |
| 37. | DOD Instruction on Medical Readiness Training | DOD Instruction on Medical Readiness Training  
16 March 2018 | On 16 March 2018, DoD Instruction 1322.24 was officially published. |
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<th>38.</th>
<th>DOD Instruction on Medical Readiness Training</th>
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<td><strong>Summary of Key Points</strong></td>
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<td>• Prehospital trauma care in tactical settings is very different from civilian settings.</td>
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<td>• Tactical and environmental factors have a profound impact on trauma care rendered on the battlefield.</td>
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<td>• Good medicine can be bad tactics.</td>
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<td>• Up to 24% of combat deaths today are potentially preventable.</td>
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<td>• Good first responder care is critical.</td>
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<td>• TCCC will give you the tools you need!</td>
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| This instruction: |
| 1) Makes TCCC the standard for battlefield trauma care in the US military |
| 2) Mandates that everyone in the US military be trained in TCCC at his or her appropriate level (All Service Member, Combatant, Combat Lifesaver, Medical Personnel) |

| Summary of Key Points |
|---|---|
| • TCCC is different from civilian trauma care training you may have received in the past. |
| This improvement in how we approach the combat casualty has resulted in significantly lower death rates in combat. |
| Good battlefield care is paramount in avoiding preventable deaths. |

| Summary of Key Points |
|---|---|
| Care Under Fire is the very limited care that can be provided while the casualty and the provider are under effective enemy fire. |
| Tactical Field Care is performed on the battlefield, but not under effective enemy fire. |
| TACEVAC Care is rendered during transport off the battlefield on the way to more definitive care. |
| 41. | **Summary of Key Points**  
TCCC was designed for combat.  
BUT many of these concepts have excellent applicability in civilian prehospital settings, too.  
**Summary of Key Points**  
TCCC was designed for combat.  
BUT many of these concepts have excellent applicability in civilian prehospital settings, too.  
TCCC is NOT necessarily the standard of care in civilian prehospital settings.  
For those of you who practice in civilian EMS settings, you should follow the guidance established by your Emergency Medical Services Director. |
| 42. | **Official TCCC Education Sites**  
[www.deployedmedicine.com](http://www.deployedmedicine.com)  
Deployed Medicine is the official website to get the most up-to-date TCCC materials.  
Deployed Medicine is a platform used by the Defense Health Agency to trial new, innovative learning models aimed at improving readiness and performance of deployed military medical personnel.  
Even though it is a .com website, it is an official site owned and managed by the Department of Defense.  
You can view the updated guidelines, educational and procedural videos and TCCC reference material. |
| 43. | **TCCC Mobile App “Deployed Medicine”**  
The Deployed Medicine website is synchronized with a mobile app you can download to smartphones or tablets.  
The same material is available on both the website and the app.  
You can watch the TCCC How-To videos or listen to the latest TCCC podcast.  
You will also be able to receive notifications of significant TCCC updates or availability of new training material. |
| 44. | **Follow TCCC on Social Media**  
TCCC is active in social media. All major TCCC announcements, like guideline updates or a new video release, are broadcast on our social media platforms.  
Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. The TCCC training videos are also available on the TCCC YouTube channel and you can join TCCC discussions on LinkedIn.  
Beware of fake or alternative social sites. These are the ONLY official TCCC social media sites. |
### TCCC Quick Reference Guide

Download an authorized copy of the Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) Quick Reference Guide

- Current abbreviated guidelines
- TCCC algorithms
- Pharmacology references
- Planning considerations.

Download at: https://www.deployedmedicine.com/market/11/content/87

You can also download a copy of the TCCC Quick Reference Guide. The QRG has various versions of the TCCC guidelines including an abbreviated version and a TCCC algorithm for easy reference and learning of appropriate TCCC-based decision making. This item is copyrighted but you have permission to download and print it or use it on a smartphone or tablet.

### TCCC Engagement

Provide TCCC feedback
Ask a TCCC question
Get on the TCCC Distribution List

usarmy.jbsa.medcom-aisr.mbx.jts-cotccc@mail.mil

You can engage with the TCCC staff and the Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care (CoTCCC). Make a suggestion, submit an idea, ask a question, or get on the TCCC e-mail distribution list.