



# Global Health and War

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Millions of people's lives have been disrupted as a result of the continuing conflict in Ukraine. The whole social fabric of the region, including health and the healthcare system, is disrupted when there is war.

There will have a significant effect on all aspects of health care, including the workforce, patients, and physical facilities. Just as the world was beginning to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic, another catastrophe broke out, causing thousands of people to be displaced and putting their health and safety in jeopardy.

The effects of war include an increase in the danger of illness, injury, and mortality, as well as a scarcity of medical supplies and restricted access to health care. The lessons of history have taught us that the length of the conflict makes the health care situation worse.

The impact that war has on people's health is not a new topic of study, but the ongoing conflict compels us to revisit the topic. The region that is directly impacted by the war bears the brunt of the suffering, but the rest of the globe is not spared. Inflation, a shortage of supply, and a food crisis are all challenges facing the world, all of which ultimately have an impact on the health of the people.

## Impact Unfavourable on Availability of Health Care

When war breaks out, hospitals and other medical institutions are often attacked or compelled to alter their operations to respond to the unfolding disaster, all while experiencing a shortage of essential supplies. This leads to a reduction in access to medical treatment, which is especially problematic in regions that are already under-served or under-resourced and have a precarious health infrastructure.

Patients with chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes are sometimes forced to wait for lengthy periods of time before receiving treatment since health care

providers are often the target of violence. This may lead to incorrect diagnosis as well as illnesses that go untreated.

## The Availability of Food and Water

When there is a crisis, there is nearly always a compromise made about access to water, sanitation, and hygiene, as well as proper nourishment. Because water treatment systems are constantly destroyed and water sources are frequently polluted, this creates an environment that is ideal for the growth of water-borne diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea. The danger is especially high for children under the age of 5, as this age group has the highest mortality rate associated with WASH-related illnesses compared to any other age group.

Food scarcities are another widespread problem. Even though hunger as a technique of warfare is illegal by the Geneva Convention, military action results in interruptions to food production and supply systems, which leads to soaring costs and an increased risk of acute malnutrition.

## Displaced People likely to get infectious diseases

People are forced to evacuate war zones, which results in huge population mobility both within countries and beyond borders. Civilians are often forced to suffer lengthy trips from one location to another, while also living in crowded refugee camps that lack adequate hygienic facilities. However, the vulnerability of displaced individuals renders them more vulnerable to catching infectious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and TB. Contrary to what is often believed, population migration itself is not related with the spread of sickness.

## Immunization Schedules Are Thrown Off Balance

During times of war, routine vaccination efforts often come to a halt. As a result, communities are left

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vulnerable to epidemics and disease outbreaks that may have otherwise been avoided. This is of the utmost importance when considering diseases like COVID-19 or polio, for which there is now no treatment. The latter is especially dangerous for children under the age of five since it may result in permanent paralysis or even death. Getting vaccinated is the most effective approach to protect against the disease and its repercussions.

### **Influence on Mental Health**

In addition to the detrimental impacts that conflicts have on people's physical health, they also have a significant impact on people's mental health. Extreme

mental and emotional strain may be caused by several circumstances, including prolonged exposure to traumatic events, the death of loved ones, the disruption of regular social and professional activities, and uncertainty over the future.

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