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DO BURNS INCREASE THE SEVERITY OF TERROR INJURIES?

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Introduction The rise in the incidence of burns among victims of terror was proportionate to the rise in the incidence of burns among all trauma victims. The aim was to compare the severity of injuries and outcome in terror victims with and without burns injuries.

Methods Data were obtained from the Israeli Trauma Registry for all patients admitted to 8–10 hospitals in Israel between 1997 and 2003. We analyzed and compared demographic and clinical characteristics of 219 terror-related burn patients (Terror/Burn), 2228 terror patients with no associated burns (Terror/no-Burns) and 6546 non terror related burn patients (Burn/no-Terror). Severity of injuries was measured using the Injury Severity Score, total Bode Surface Percentage, admission rates to Intensive Care Units and in-hospital mortalities.

Results Of burn/terror patients, 87.2% suffered other accompanying injuries, compared with 10.4% of burn/no-terror patients. Of burn/terror patients, 49.8% were admitted to ICU compared with only 11.9% of burn/no-terror patients and 23.8% of no-burn/terror patients. Mean length of hospital stay was 18.5 days for the terror/burn group compared with 11.1 days for the burn/no-terror group and 9.5 days for the terror/no-burn group. Burn/terror patients had a significantly higher injury severity score compared with the other groups. In-hospital mortality rate for the burn/no-terror group was 3.4%. The burn/terror group had a mortality of 6.4% which was similar to the no-burn/terror group (6.6%).

Conclusions Terror-attack injuries with accompanying burns have a more complex presentation, are of higher severity, and are associated with increased length of stay and a higher ICU admissions rate, compared with terror-attack injuries without burns and non terror-attack related burns. However, mortalities in terror-attack injuries are not affected by burns.