

Abstract

An eye for an eye – ophthalmic injuries in the field

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Ophthalmic pathologies are a common occurrence in emergency rooms in the home country. We assume they do occur with a similar or maybe a higher frequency during deployments, plus there is the increased risk of ocular trauma due to combat actions. The relative proportion of eye injuries has been steadily on the rise from the First World War to the modern battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. Eye injuries and other ophthalmic pathologies have the potential, through loss of vision, to cause serious disability for the deployed servicemen. Loss of vision can cause massive psychological strain on the injured person and the medic, as most combat medics have little knowledge of ophthalmology and the basic skills that could be applied in situations during deployments away from definitive care. This short presentation shall enable the ophthalmologic laymen to recognize serious vision threatening symptoms and give some propositions on the preparation of an “eye kit” for the medical supplies during combat or patrol missions.