Maintaining the effective width of the evacuation pathways is of prime importance. Emphasis should be given to designing the emergency evacuation infrastructure and strategies during hospital building planning.

Keywords: disaster; emergency; evacuation; hospital; hospital evacuation
Prehosp Disaster Med

Model of Independent Nursing Practice in Chemical Warfare

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Biochemical warfare is a threat in today's political arena. The potential and projected numbers of victims of such events have created a medical challenge that may be met by the expanded role of the nurse acting as an essential and independent caregiver.

Current legislation has empowered the Israeli nurse to perform those necessary acts during times of war.

The transformation of the nurse in peacetime involves active programs that anticipate emergencies. The Disaster Nurse Coordinator assesses and interprets military field evaluations and provides care efficiently at the hospital and community levels.

Keywords: caregiving; Disaster Nurse Coordinator; Israel; nursing; war
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Emerging Infectious Diseases: Department Design Makes a Difference

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The physical design and infrastructure of a hospital or institution is an essential component of its infection control measure. Thus, it must be a prerequisite to take these issues into consideration in the initial conception and planning stages of the building. The balance between designing a hospital to be an open, accessible, and public place and the reduction of the spread of infections diseases is a necessity. At Singapore General Hospital, many lessons were learned during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak pertaining to this issue. During and subsequent to the SARS outbreak, many changes at the hospital enabled staff to handle and face any emerging infectious situation with calm, confidence, and the knowledge that staff and patients would be in good stead.

Keywords: department design; hospitals; infections diseases; severe acute respiratory syndrome; Singapore
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Radiological Decontamination, Assessment, and Treatment Center

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One of the main outcomes of a Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD) terrorist event will be the probable exposure of the population in the vicinity of the radioactive materials. The central objective of a Radiological Decontamination, Assessment and Treatment Center (RDATC) is to divert a mass of uninvolved population (worried-well), as well as those who were mildly exposed to radiation, from flooding the hospitals. The extent of decontamination capabilities will be influenced by public instructions and recommendations concerning the need to perform a self-decontamination at home before reaching the RDATC. The assessment of a mass population for external contamination can be conducted manually by professional radiation inspectors, but this would take a lot of time. Radiation ports should be used, which are more suitable for detection of gamma radiation. Assessment of internal contamination and exposure are based on estimation of the proximity to the scene, the exposure time to radioactive materials, as well as clinical symptoms and in vitro bioassays (urine samples). Most of the population will need guidance and cognitive support, but some will need decorporation therapy with chelating agents and evacuation to hospitals. Because of its unique role in treating a mass population in such a distinctive event, the RDATC must open soon after the event. Early attempts to inform the public and worried well also should be made.

Keywords: cognitive support decontamination; radioactive materials; radiological dispersal device; worried well
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Challenges and Opportunities in the 2009 Pandemic Influenza Vaccination Program: The Global and Israeli View

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Introduction: Vaccines are a cornerstone in any pandemic influenza preparedness plan. Principles and challenges of the vaccination program are similar but its implementation should be tailored for each country, based on its unique culture, health system, and resources, as well as current epidemiological condition and experience with mass vaccination.

Methods: Challenges and opportunities for the Global and Israeli 2009 pandemic influenza vaccination program were systematically identified and analyzed based on Israel's and other countries' experience with pandemic preparedness and response, as well as mass vaccination program planning. Israel took an active role in the World Health Organization's Workshop on this subject, and common lessons from the workshop were adapted. The analysis considered all the relevant steps for successful vaccination, such as procurement, regulation, prioritization, management, communication, resources, deployment, vaccination, surveillance, and summary.

Results: Global and Israeli challenges and opportunities were identified and addressed. Major challenges were found to be common to all countries, such as uncertainty regarding the severity of disease, availability and timing of vaccine