

Israel's Emergency Expertise

A RANGE OF ISRAELI MEDICAL PRODUCTS HAS WON ACCLAIM IN THE UNITED STATES FOR SAVING THE LIVES OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS ON THE BATTLEFIELDS OF AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ.

American soldiers wounded in Afghanistan and Iraq are being treated—and saved, according to military officials—by a state-of-the-art Israeli bandage.

Called the Emergency Bandage, the brainchild of Brooklyn-born Israeli Bernard Bar-Natan is on its way to becoming the standard bandage issued to medics throughout the U.S. Army and some American law enforcement organizations.

Already among its clients are the

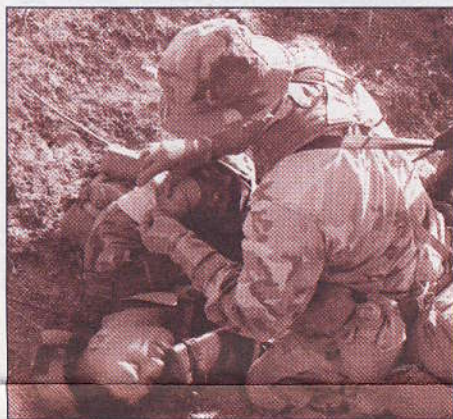


Photo courtesy of Hillel Kuttler

An innovative Israeli bandage is being used by U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Army's Special Operations Forces, 3rd Infantry Division, 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, 10th Mountain Division and 75th Rangers Division. The Navy Seals also use the product, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency.

The bandage, produced by First Care Products Ltd. of Rosh Pina, is revolutionary in that it enables combat medics to simultaneously dress a wound and apply pressure to stem a patient's bleeding.

Its varied functions—the bandage is a primary dressing, applies pressure and is a sterile dressing—makes it popular with American military-medical personnel, who refer to it as “the Israeli bandage” or the “three-in-one bandage.”

Robert Miller, who used the Emergency Bandage as a medic with the U.S. Army's Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, calls it “a great multi-purpose dressing” for mild to moderate hemorrhages and a “must-have tool” for combat soldiers.

Miller's 3rd Rangers Regiment includes the bandage in the standard kit issued to all soldiers, not only medics.

“We used to use Ace wraps,” said Miller. “This is the next step up from that. The key is the closure bar, which lets me get [the bandage] nice and tight. The elastic material attached to the non-adhesive bandage is very valuable, because it allows me to channelize the pressure onto the wound without the dressing slipping.”

The bandage, one million of which were sold last year, also is used by medics in the militaries of European and even Muslim countries.

“When I get judged, I may get a few extra points, because whoever saves a life saves the world,” said Bar-Natan, referring to a Jewish dictum about the value of each human life.

Israeli companies have developed a range of emergency medical products that are used throughout the world. The Jewish state has become an internationally recognized leader in providing care to trauma victims due to the constant threat posed to its citizens by Palestinian terrorism.

Another life-saving Israeli product is the Bone Injection Gun (BIG), produced by Caesarea-based Waismed.

When first responders reach a soldier losing blood or a civilian in cardiac arrest, they sometimes cannot administer intravenous fluid because the veins have collapsed or otherwise cannot be located.

BIG's spring-delivered needle enables a medic to penetrate the tibia within seconds and inject saline or medications into the marrow.

The syringe is used throughout the American military—including by many units in Iraq and Afghanistan—as well as by the CIA, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Other customers include American hospitals, emergency medical service providers and fire departments.

Brian Petrilla, a paramedic in Tomball, Texas, calls BIG a huge improvement over inserting an endotracheal intubation tube when an IV cannot be inserted in a vein.

In December, he said, BIG “made the difference” in resuscitating a heavy-set man who had gone into cardiac arrest, by quickly getting drugs into his system.

A third Israeli product helps those involved in a less savory aspect of rescue: the search for and identification of human remains.

Odorscreen, developed by Patus Sensory Security of Tel Aviv, is an oint-

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ment that, applied to the nostrils, renders users immune to noxious smells, enabling them to work among the dead.

It is being used by international teams, including the American nongovernmental rescue teams and military personnel who went to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and other countries to recover bodies of victims of the Dec. 26 tsunami disaster that struck southeast Asia.

In Israel, Odorscreen is standard equipment in emergency medical service (EMS) units, including Magen David Adom (MDA), Israel's equivalent of the Red Cross, and ZAKA, the ultra-Orthodox Israeli organization most famous for being first responders to the scenes of Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israelis.

Shimon Grossman, an MDA and ZAKA medic, said that the masks regularly worn by emergency medical personnel are uncomfortable and must be taken off regularly so that medics can breathe fresh air.

Odorscreen “opened up a new world to us,” said Grossman, who used the ointment last year when coming upon decomposing bodies—instances when he was able to work “so much faster” with little discomfort.—Hillel Kuttler

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