

Gunshot Gaza: Hospitals Struggle to Treat Surge in Firearms Injuries

New types of complex injuries in the Palestinian territory are leading to lifelong disabilities as prompt comprehensive care is beyond the scope of already fractured health services, reports Jonathan Owen

By [Jonathan Owen](#)

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More than a thousand people in Gaza have been left with life changing injuries after being shot by Israeli soldiers at demonstrations in the past few months, doctors have said, leading to a medical emergency.

Nearly 10 000 people have received injuries requiring hospital treatment, many of them caused by shots from Israeli forces, since the Great March of Return protests began at the border with Israel at the end of March (see below).

The conflict in numbers

- 9701 Gazans have experienced injuries requiring hospital treatment, 4348 of which were caused by gunshot wounds
- Wounded limbs, mainly legs, are the most common type of injury, representing 5694 cases
- 70 amputations have had to be performed among Gazans
- About 1200 patients need limb reconstruction and will require up to seven operations and treatment for up to two years
- 153 protestors have died
- One Israeli has died and nine have been injured³

Information supplied by the Medical Aid for Palestine and Gaza's Ministry of Health

Local and British surgeons have told *The BMJ* how they have had to improvise to save limbs. They are seeing new types of injuries that will require many years of reconstructive surgery and rehabilitation.

The bloodiest single day was 14 May, when the sheer scale of casualties overwhelmed Gaza's hospitals.

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