



Gaza: Palestinian cancer patients die due to hospital closures, lack of medical care



📅 08 Nov 2023

📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

🔗 Share On [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#) [📄](#)

AR

Geneva - As Israel continues its assault on the Gaza Strip for the second month in a row, thousands of Gazan patients face a slow death due to the severe lack of medical care, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor said on Wednesday.

The Israeli attacks and targeting of hospitals, along with Israel's cutting off of humanitarian supplies,

have put hundreds of cancer and chronic disease patients, pregnant women, and newborn babies at risk of death, Euro-Med Monitor warned.

The international human rights group drew attention to the grave dangers associated with Gaza's worsening health service deficit. Prior to the recent Israeli bombardment of the Strip, the region was already severely underfunded, and cancer patients in particular faced difficulties in receiving the medical care they required despite their urgent health needs.

The Euro-Med Monitor team has documented the deaths of at least 12 cancer patients in the Gaza Strip, following the closure of the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital. The only hospital in the Strip that specialised in treating cancer patients, the facility shut down about 10 days ago, and other hospitals in Gaza lack the ability to provide these patients with the care that is necessary for their survival.

The Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital was forced to close due to frequent Israeli attacks, as well as a lack of fuel and medical supplies—factors which ultimately pushed the hospital's administration to evacuate all patients and send them to shelter centres or back their homes in the absence of medical care.

Gaza City resident Mohamed Ziyad, 48, informed the Euro-Med Monitor team that he had been receiving

treatment for cancer in the Turkish hospital. Ziyad explained that his condition was worsening as a result of the hospital's power outage, repeated Israeli air raids, and the facility's eventual closure. The lung cancer patient said he was taken from the hospital to his home on Al-Jalaa Street in Gaza City after the closure, and has had no access to any medical care since then.

Ibtisam Odeh, 57, a resident of northern Gaza, said that her health situation worsened after she was forced to move from the Turkish hospital to Al-Aqsa Hospital, which lacks the necessary resources to treat cancer patients.

Despite the grave risk to their lives, Gazans in treatment for cancer and serious chronic diseases are no longer given priority in health care scenarios. This is due to the preoccupation with the effects of Israel's intense air, ground, and artillery attacks on the Strip, which have resulted in a record-breaking number of casualties, Euro-Med Monitor said.

The rights organisation warned that thousands of patients—more than 2,000 cancer patients, more than 1,000 patients in need of dialysis to survive, 50,000 cardiovascular patients, and over 60,000 diabetics—urgently need access to basic healthcare services considering the severe shortage of medications, medical supplies, fuel, food, and clean water.

Thousands of elderly and bedridden patients are suffering from a complete lack of health care, while pregnant women and newborn infants are at risk of death from dehydration, malnutrition, and lack of medical care.

There are currently over 55,000 pregnant women in Gaza, 5,500 of whom are about to give birth. Many women are being forced to give birth in overcrowded hospitals, homes, and shelters, raising the risk of infection and other critical health problems. The rate of miscarriage among pregnant women in the Strip has also recently increased by more than four times.

The steadily declining health status of patients coincides with a hospital occupancy rate in the Gaza Strip that surpasses 200%, noted Euro-Med Monitor. Shifa Medical Complex, for example, is currently housing 5,000 patients despite its capacity of 700.

All of this is occurring at the same time as hospitals are being targeted by Israeli attacks, which persist in spite of the fact that these facilities are providing shelter to hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people who have limited access to services elsewhere.

The attacks place more strain on medical staff, who work nonstop under extreme pressure, especially as meals and clean water become increasingly scarce in hospitals and across the Strip. Displaced people are being forced to eat food that is either unhealthy or unfit for human consumption, said Euro-Med

Monitor, amid the deteriorating conditions of the seriously sick or injured.

Eighteen out of 35 hospitals in the Gaza Strip have stopped operating so far, according to local health officials there. Overall, 120 health institutions have been targeted, while more than 48 primary care centres (70%) are now out of service due to the ongoing Israeli raids and the fuel crisis.

According to the World Health Organisation, hospitals in Gaza City and the Strip's northern governorates are performing complex surgeries—including amputations—without anesthesia, due to a lack of medical supplies.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor charged that Israel is carrying out one of the bloodiest collective punishment campaigns in modern history against the over 2.3 million people in the Gaza Strip, which represents a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and a grave violation of the rules of war.

Euro-Med Monitor renewed its call to all members of the international community, particularly those who have ratified the Geneva Convention, to fulfill their obligations to protect civilians and preserve medical facilities in the Gaza Strip, to promptly supply them with the resources they require, and to make sure they are never targeted.



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS MONITOR

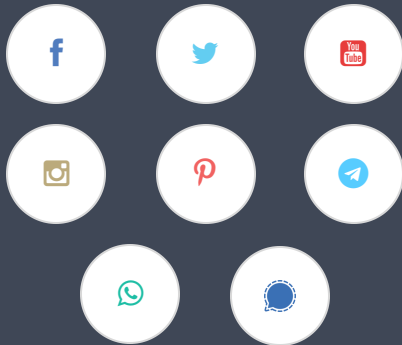
Defending freedom Throughout
the MENA Region and Europe

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor is a Geneva-based independent organization with regional offices across the MENA region and Europe

FOCUS AREAS



CONNECT WITH US



NEWSLETTER

Get News & Action Alerts in
Your Email.

Subscribe

Subscribe

[Privacy Policy](#)