



## Scores of the wounded and sick die due to Rafah crossing closure



📅 18 May 2024

📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

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

AR

**Palestinian Territory** - The ongoing closure of the Rafah land crossing, which connects the Gaza Strip to Egypt, has resulted in a dire humanitarian crisis for Palestinian civilians and has accelerated the genocide that has been taking place since 7 October.

By blocking the Rafah crossing, Israel has tightened its grip and imposed a crippling siege on the Gaza Strip, cutting it off from the outside world and resulting in the deaths of scores of injured and ill people. Additionally, the closure of the crossing has hindered the flow of humanitarian aid and medical supplies, further undermining the efforts of the few remaining local hospitals.

The closure of the Rafah crossing has made it impossible for more than 11,000 wounded people to get the urgent medical care they need outside the Gaza Strip, while over 10,000 cancer patients and at least 2,000 patients with other diseases—of whom about 750 are children—require treatment outside the Gaza Strip.

Fewer than 4,000 cancer patients have been granted permission to leave Gaza to receive treatment abroad since October 2023, according to officials at the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza and medical relief organisations. However, in practice, only about 600 patients have done so, and the remaining patients currently face an uncertain future due to the closure of the Rafah crossing, knowing that the majority of cancer treatments are not available inside Gaza.

Mona Abdel Rahman, a woman in her late thirties, was waiting for her name to show up on the list of patients who were permitted to travel for breast cancer treatment when the Rafah crossing was

closed. This left her back at the starting line, vulnerable to further decline in her health.

She was diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago, according to her husband Saeed, and was getting treatment in Jerusalem on occasion until the Israeli military attack started, which prevented her from leaving the Gaza Strip to continue her care. With her health continuing to deteriorate, they were waiting for permission for her to travel to Turkey at any time to finish her treatment; however, the closure of the Rafah crossing denied her that opportunity.

Cancer patients in the Gaza Strip lack access to hormonal or immunological treatments for their disease, as well as infrastructure for producing chemotherapy, at a time when they are living in shelter centres, medical facilities, or hospitals that are ill-equipped to care for cancer patients. This is due to the severe deterioration of the health system and the closure of the majority of the local hospitals.

Some children in Gaza suffer from rare diseases that call for special treatment and ongoing monitoring. Munir Al-Dahdouh, for example, is said by his family to have a rare genetic disorder called Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, which stunts his growth, results in congenital deformities, and causes him to lose limbs.

The family made progress in getting their sick child treated abroad, but all of their efforts were thwarted

until further notice by the Israeli army's closure of the Rafah crossing.

Approximately 40% of the medical cases authorized to leave the Rafah crossing were exiting at a rate of approximately 40 cases per day prior to the Israeli army seizing control of the crossing.

In addition to the serious consequences of halting the entry of life-saving aid and fuel supplies required to continue humanitarian operations and run all essential sectors, including the health system, the ongoing closure of the Rafah crossing puts thousands of injured and ill people in the Gaza Strip in grave danger of dying, without access to essential treatment outside the Strip, and potentially doubling the number of critical medical cases and deaths as a result of delayed treatment.

Given the deficiency of medical services in the Gaza Strip as a result of Israel's genocide, which has destroyed most hospitals and health facilities and resulted in the deaths and incarceration of numerous doctors and medical personnel, an immediate international intervention is required to reopen the Rafah crossing and assure secure transit for civilians, particularly safe passage for the sick and wounded to allow them to receive life-saving treatment abroad.

As the occupying power in Gaza, Israel is blatantly violating international humanitarian law and committing war crimes when it deliberately

punishes sick and injured civilians and when it fails to fulfill its legal obligations to provide medical care. These abuses must not be tolerated.



## EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS MONITOR

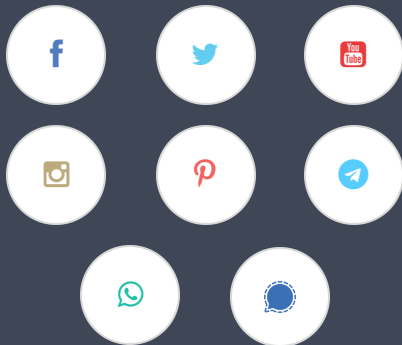
Defending freedom Throughout  
the MENA Region and Europe

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](#)