



Treating terrorists and victims: a moral dilemma

run high among the individuals and no less so among medical staff.

The moral issue of concurrently treating a terrorist and his victim

is even more complex. Is it actually realistic to expect the staff to disregard

the fact that the terrorist intended to kill the innocent person lying

wounded in the same trauma unit?

The sacredness of life and the moral obligation of saving the life of every

human being are severely challenged when the human being in question

is determined to annihilate not only human life but specifically targets

the lives of family, neighbours, and fellow citizens. And, how much more

complex is it when established triage protocols put the needs of the terrorist

before the victims?

After treating the Boston marathon suspected terrorist, the head of

emergency medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center admitted

"some staff battled second thoughts and anxiety over saving the life of a

suspected terrorist". This has also been our experience. It is easy to take to the

moral high ground when an issue is purely theoretical, and quite another

matter when shock, frustration, and anger enter into play. The Boston

example emphasises the need for unambiguous guidance and a crystal

clear message to caregivers confronted with these stressful and emotional

circumstances.

In our opinion, all patients entering the hospital are unequivocally equal

without exception. As difficult as it might be, the medical staff must not be

judgmental. Punishment is not the role of the medical staff, rather, their duty

and obligation is to preserve life and restore health. Judgment should be

the exclusive province of the legal system and physicians should practice

war. Although it is morally accepted from an ethical and philosophical

standpoint that all human beings in need deserve medical care as

long as they no longer constitute an imminent threat to their

surroundings, emotions notwithstanding

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Surviving victim of Saturday's Jerusalem terror attack gives chilling

account of events

Adele Benita, one of the surviving victims of Saturday's terror attack in Jerusalem's Old

City, gave a chilling account of how the stabbing attack, that killed her husband and

another man who came to the family's help, unfolded and how her cries for help were

ignored as she herself was stabbed repeatedly. "I yelled 'please help me!' and they just

spat at me," Benita told the Israeli Ynetnews site of the surrounding Palestinian store

owners, whom she said stood by as the Palestinian terrorist, 19-year-

old Muhanad Halabi, stabbed her husband to death in an alleyway near Lion's Gate in

the Old City.

The family's two-year-old son was also lightly injured in the attack after the attacker

wrestled the weapon Aharon Benita was carrying from him and began shooting at a

nearly group of tourists and police. The Benita's infant girl miraculously

remained unharmed.

Benita was taken in serious condition to Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem in Jerusalem,

where she underwent a life saving emergency surgery overnight Saturday.

Her husband died of his wounds at Shaare Zedek Hospital, also in Jerusalem, shortly

after the attack.

"When we got back from the Western Wall, we felt that something wasn't right," she

told Ynet news from her hospital bed Sunday.

"We started walking fast but the terrorist emerged from one of the stores and lunged at

us and started stabbing my husband. My husband is a strong man and started fighting

him, he punched him in the face. At that point, the terrorist started stabbing me. Then he

went back to my husband and stabbed him again and again. I also fought him, I tried to

One of them slapped her while another laughed in her face and told her to "drop

dead" when she told him she would give him a million shekels if he helped her get to

safety with her two toddlers.

"They saw that we were with two baby carriages," she said.

Nehemia Lavi, 41, an Old City resident who heard Benita's cries for help, came to help

and, he too was stabbed and killed by the terrorist.