

PREPARATION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ON THE EARLY AND LATE PHASE OF TSUNAMI

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Abstract

Tsunami is a series of ocean waves produced by a submarine earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption. These waves may reach enormous dimensions and may have sufficient energy to travel across the entire ocean and to destroy human lives near the beach up to a distance of some kilometers from the shoreline. Severe damage can be caused by large tsunamis to both and other fishing equipment, to houses, to tourist resorts, to schools, to water and sanitation, and to infrastructures. In addition they can cause substantial damage to health services, which becomes an essential issue since these services are immediately needed for a quick medical response. If the medical response is late, then it leads to prolonging the provision of medical assistance especially to persons severely injured as well as to spreading of infectious diseases [1]. Indeed, suddenly after tsunami strikes the land, many people suffer traumatic injuries, that are caused by the impact of sharp or blunt object. In the phase, sometimes there can be a further trouble when treating traumatic patients, because medical equipments might be broken as a consequence of the tsunami. Tsunami produce mud, causing contamination of water, which in turn results into sanitation and hygiene problems that may cause infectious diseases that may be complicated to treat. There are conditions that can be more difficult compared to other types of disasters. For example, the logistical problems of distributing goods could be very difficult due to bad weather, problematic access and limited transportation. Air, sea and land transportations need much more effort for distribution of medical services. Because of the tsunami damage, aircraft could not land, ships or boats could only anchor at 500 m – 1 km far from the new coastline, made the tsunami, and trooper cars, trucks, and other land transportation vehicles could find it impossible to reach the disaster area. Usually, there is only way to distribute the medical supplies in the early phase of tsunamis, i.e. by helicopter. Based on this situation, the medical assistance can be divided into two phases, that is early and the late phase of a tsunami attack.