

Abstract

Cancer Care in Humanitarian Crises: A Scoping Review of the Impact of the Conflict in the Gaza Strip (2023–2026)

Valerio Di Nardo¹

¹ *Training, Quality and Communication Unit, “S. Maria” Hospital, Terni, Italy*
(Corresponding Author: valeriodinardo1987@gmail.com)

Citation: Di Nardo, V. (2026). Cancer care in humanitarian crises: A scoping review of the impact of the conflict in the Gaza Strip (2023–2026). *International Journal of Health Supplements*, 1(Suppl. 2), 198. <https://doi.org/10.82051/ijhs-2026-Suppl2>

Introduction. The ongoing conflict in Gaza has had profound humanitarian consequences for its residents. Cancer patients are among the most vulnerable populations, as the conflict severely restricts access to diagnosis and treatment. Approximately 10,000 people are living with cancer in Gaza, with more than 2,000 new cases diagnosed each year. Despite the increasing cancer burden among forcibly displaced populations, evidence supporting equitable and needs-based cancer responses remains scarce. The aim of this study was to understand the impact of the conflict in the Gaza Strip on cancer care.

Methods. A scoping review was conducted using the PCC framework: Population, cancer patients residing in the Gaza Strip; Concept, critical challenges in cancer care delivery; and Context, the Gaza Strip health system. Searches included PubMed, Scopus, and World Health Organization reports.

Results. Gaza’s only cancer hospital ceased functioning on November 1, 2023. Destruction of healthcare infrastructure, loss of healthcare professionals, and shortages of essential supplies have contributed to delayed cancer diagnosis and treatment and progression toward advanced, often incurable, disease. Cancer patients also experience substantial psychological distress related to continuous exposure to violence, fear, despair, stress, and malnutrition. These conditions further compromise patients’ ability to cope with disease and adhere to treatment, while limited resources mean that their needs may not receive adequate priority.

Discussion. Providing cancer care in conflict-affected settings raises complex ethical challenges. Oncology requires specialized treatments, diagnostics, infrastructure, and considerable resources that may be unavailable during humanitarian crises. Scarcity forces difficult decisions concerning justice, prioritization, and the balance between curative and palliative goals. Cancer care in humanitarian crises therefore represents not only a clinical challenge, but also a moral imperative and a test of global solidarity.

Keywords: Cancer Care, Humanitarian Crises, Gaza

© The Author(s) 2026. This abstract is published by iEditore and distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Funding: This research received no external funding. **Conflict of Interest:** The author declares no conflict of interest.