



Combat & Disaster Medicine Symposium 2026

(preliminary programme - subject to change)

Date: 31.10.2026

Location: Cantonal Military Base Bern, Papiermühlestrasse 13 + 15, 3000 Bern 22, Switzerland

[From 07:45]	Registration & Exhibition Opening	Foyer
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Morning Programme: Lectures			
[08:30 - 08:35]	Welcome Address	Lt David Kremer	Main Auditorium
[08:35 - 08:50] Discussion after presentation: 3 minutes	Forward together!	Lieutenant General Benedikt Roos	
[08:53 - 09:08] Discussion after presentation: 3 minutes	Medical Readiness in an Uncertain World: Strategic Impact of Swiss Medical Services	Major General Andreas Stettbacher	
[09:11 - 09:31] Discussion after presentation: 4 minutes	Strategic Horizons: Geopolitics in an Era of Permanent Disruption	Dr. Remo Reginold	
[09:35 - 09:55] Discussion after presentation: 4 minutes	Conflict in Medicine in the 21st Century: New Challenges and What Has Changed?	Dr. Enrique Steiger, MD	
[10:00 - 10:30]	Coffee Break & Exhibition Visit		Foyer
[10:30 - 10:45] Discussion after presentation: 2 minutes	Medical Solutions for Military Healthcare and Disaster Response	Zoé Schmid, KARL STORZ Endoskope Schweiz AG	Main Auditorium
[10:47 - 11:07] Discussion after presentation: 1 minutes	Coordinating Care in Crisis - Experiences from a Real Mission	Dr. Richard Steffen, MD	
[11:08 - 11:28] Discussion after presentation: 1 minutes	Staged Management of Severe Burns: Principles of Damage Control	Prof. Dr. Patrick Duhamel, MD	
[11:29 - 11:49] Discussion after presentation: 1 minutes	<i>TOPIC TO BE ANNOUNCED</i>	Prof. Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD	
[11:50 - 12:20]	When Systems Are Tested: Lessons from a Major Fire Disaster	Major General Andreas Stettbacher, Dr. Richard Steffen, MD, Prof. Dr. Patrick Duhamel, MD, Prof. Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD	



[12:20 - 13:30]	Lunch Break & Exhibition Visit	Foyer
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Afternoon Programm: Workshops			
[13:30 - 15:00]	War Casualty Triage Simulation - Workshop	Prof. Dr. Paul Balandraud, MD	announced on-site
[13:30 - 16:30]	TCCC - Workshop	pract. med. Tim Steck, MD	announced on-site
	Trauma Surgery - Workshop	Dr. Arnaud Meylan, MD Dr. Arnaud Fischbacher, MD	announced on-site
	Vascular Surgery - Workshop	Dr. Matteo Bernasconi, MD	announced on-site
	Neurosurgery - Workshop	PD Dr. Michel Röthlisberger, MD PD Dr. Julien Hämmerli, MD	announced on-site
	Burn Surgery - Workshop	Prof. Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD	announced on-site
[16:35 - 16:45]	Closing Ceremony	Executive Board of ASMD	Main Auditorium
[16:50 - 18:00]	Networking Reception		Foyer



Lecture & Workshop Description

Lectures	
[08:35 - 08:50]	Forward together! <i>Lieutenant General Benedikt Roos (Chief of the Swiss Armed Forces)</i> This presentation explores the evolving geopolitical landscape and its implications for Switzerland's security. Against the backdrop of a potential conflict between Russia and NATO, it highlights why Switzerland could be directly affected despite its geographical position and neutrality. It also addresses existing capability gaps within the Swiss Armed Forces and growing challenges in defence procurement. Key priorities for strengthening national defence include countering hybrid threats, protecting critical infrastructure, and defending against long-range attacks.
[08:53 - 09:08]	Medical Readiness in an Uncertain World: Strategic Impact of Swiss Medical Services <i>Major General Andreas Stettbacher (Surgeon General of the Swiss Armed Forces)</i> Swiss Medical Services doctrine, cooperation with civilian health care and international potential collaborations.
[09:11 - 09:31]	Strategic Horizons: Geopolitics in an Era of Permanent Disruption <i>Dr. Remo Reginold (Political Advisor and President of Swiss Institute for Global Affairs)</i> The global strategic environment is undergoing profound transformation. Traditional assumptions about stability, alliances, security, and economic interdependence are increasingly challenged by geopolitical fragmentation, technological competition, hybrid influence operations, and shifting power centres. Yet one central question remains: Is the world truly becoming more unpredictable?
[09:35 - 09:55]	Conflict in Medicine in the 21st Century: New Challenges — What Has Changed? <i>Dr. Enrique Steiger, MD (Co-Founder of Clinic Utoquai, Switzerland; board certified in plastic and reconstructive surgery, and general surgery & traumatology)</i> How have conditions in this challenging environment shifted in recent years, and is it still possible to deliver meaningful, sustainable humanitarian aid amid such danger? Looking ahead, what must change to safeguard the future of humanitarian work in the 21st century? Dr. Steiger will address these critical questions, drawing on nearly three decades of experience across more than 23 conflict zones with his foundation SWISSCROSS, the ICRC, the UN, the OSCE, and other international organizations.
[10:30 - 10:45]	Medical Solutions for Military Healthcare and Disaster Response <i>Zoé Schmid, B.A, M.Sc. (Business Managerin, KARL STORZ Schweiz AG)</i> This presentation introduces medical solutions for military healthcare and disaster response, with a particular focus on airway management and mobile medical care.



Lectures

	It highlights practical approaches and technologies designed to support medical teams in delivering effective care in challenging operational environments. Additionally, it explores how digital connectivity and telemedicine enable access to remote medical expertise, supporting clinical decision-making in military and disaster scenarios.
[10:47 - 11:07]	Coordinating Care in Crises - Experiences from a real Mission <i>Dr. Richard Steffen, MD (Head of Anaesthesia, Pain Therapy and Intensive Care Clinic, Hôpital du Valais, Switzerland; board certified in Anesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine)</i> This lecture shares a personal first-hand experiences in leading a major emergency response during a mass casualty incident. It discusses the critical first minutes, the establishment of command structures, and the coordination between partner organizations under extreme pressure. Focusing on real-life challenges and key decision points, it will demonstrate why patient care and transport were established so quickly and coordinated. Finally, the talk highlights practical lessons for adequate preparation for future disaster and combat medicine scenarios.
[11:08 - 11:28]	Staged Management of Severe Burns: Principles of Damage Control <i>Prof. Dr. Patrick Duhamel, MD (Professeur agrégé of Plastic and Burn Surgery, French Armed Forces Health Academy, École du Val-de-Grâce, Paris, France; Percy Military Teaching Hospital, Clamart, France; Vice-President of the Francophone Society of Burn Medicine)</i> This lecture will explore the staged management of severe burn injuries, with a focus on damage control principles in complex settings. It will highlight key strategies from initial stabilization to definitive surgical care, including considerations relevant to mass casualty and combat environments.
[11:29 - 11:49]	TOPIC TO BE ANNOUNCED <i>Prof Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD (Director of the Center for Severe Burn Injuries at the Department of Plastic Surgery and Hand Surgery, University Hospital Zurich, Switzerland; board certified in plastic and reconstructive surgery)</i>
[11:50 - 12:20]	When Systems Are Tested: Lessons from a Major Fire Disaster <i>Major General Andreas Stettbacher, Dr. Richard Steffen, MD, Prof. Dr. Patrick Duhamel, MD, Prof. Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD</i> Using a major fire disaster as a case study, the speakers discuss critical decision points, interagency collaboration, resource limitations, and system vulnerabilities. The session highlights practical lessons for improving preparedness, resilience, and integrated response in future disaster and combat medicine scenarios.



Workshops

[13:30 - 15:00]

War Casualty Triage Simulation - Workshop

Prof. Dr. Paul Balandraud, MD (Head of the Department of General and Digestive Surgery Sainte-Anne Military Teaching Hospital, Toulon, France; Chair of Military Surgery Val-de-Grâce Military Teaching Hospital School, Paris, France; board-certified in surgery (subspecialty in visceral surgery))

This workshop consists of a war casualty triage exercise in the form of a role-playing scenario that simulates the management of a mass casualty influx in a field surgical unit. Participants must make treatment decisions and justify them to each other.

Experience Level: Suitable for anyone (physicians and medical students) interested in war casualty triage, including paramedics. No prior experience is required.

[13:30 - 16:30]

TCCC (Tactical Combat Casualty Care)

pract. med. Tim Steck, MD (Founding Member and Co-President of Swiss Emergency Medicine Student Association, Internal Medicine Resident, Gesundheitszentrum Fricktal AG, Switzerland)

This hands-on workshop combines concise theoretical teaching with practical skill development, focusing on key TCCC concepts, specific interventions, and realistic scenario-based exercises. Participants will engage in demonstrations, guided intervention practice, and immersive simulation training using role players and full gear to reinforce decision-making and casualty management in high-pressure environments.

Experience Level: Suitable for anyone with an interest in Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC). No prior experience is required.

Trauma Surgery

Dr. Arnaud Meylan, MD (Deputy Senior Consultant at the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology, Ensemble Hospitalier de la Côte, Switzerland)

Dr. Arnaud Fischbacher, MD (Senior Consultant at the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology, Centre hospitalier universitaire vaudois, Switzerland; board-certified in orthopedics and traumatology)

This hands-on workshop focuses on two essential skills in war and disaster surgery: external fixation of long bone fractures and field amputation. Participants will first learn to apply modular external fixation systems on synthetic bone models. The second part simulates damage control surgery in austere environments, with participants practicing guillotine-style lower limb amputations on animal models (porcine limbs). Emphasis is placed on rapid decision-making, proper technique, and post-operative considerations in low-resource or battlefield settings.

Experience level: Recommended for junior surgical residents and medical students in the Master's programme with an interest in trauma surgery.

Vascular Surgery

Dr. Matteo Bernasconi, MD (Lead Consultant at the Department of Visceral Surgery, Ente Ospedaliero Cantonale, Ticino, Switzerland; board certified in surgery (subspecialty in vascular surgery, and general surgery & traumatology))

This 3-hour course introduces the fundamentals of vascular surgical suturing. It



Workshops

combines a brief theoretical session with hands-on practice. Participants will perform key techniques including direct suturing, patch angioplasty, and vascular anastomosis. The course is designed to build precision, confidence, and familiarity with essential skills used in vascular surgery.

Experience Level: Recommended for junior surgical residents and final-year medical students with an interest in vascular surgery and prior experience in basic suturing techniques

Neurosurgery

PD Dr. Michel Röthlisberger, MD (Senior Consultant at the Department of Neurosurgery, University Hospital Basel, Switzerland; board certified in neurosurgery)
PD Dr. Julien Haemmerli, MD (Senior Consultant at the Department of Neurosurgery, Kantonsspital Winterthur, Switzerland; board certified in neurosurgery)

This practical workshop introduces participants to the core principles and technical steps of main procedures and a simulation:

- Learn how to do correct head placement for a brain surgery, the fundamental rules and practical training.
- Intracranial Pressure captor placement on a 3D-printed skull model.
- decompressive hemicraniectomy, a life-saving procedure in traumatic brain injury. Using anatomically accurate 3D-printed skull models, participants will directly perform burr holes, craniotomy cuts, and bone flap removal under expert supervision. The session focuses on developing surgical confidence and understanding spatial anatomy in austere or combat settings.
- Basic training of spinal endoscopic procedure using an advanced technology simulation.

Experience level: Recommended for junior neurosurgical residents and final-year medical students with a strong interest in neurosurgery.

Burn Surgery

- Prof. Dr. Bong-Sung Kim, MD (Director of the Center for Severe Burn Injuries at the Department of Plastic Surgery and Hand Surgery, University Hospital Zurich, Switzerland; board certified in plastic and reconstructive surgery)

This workshop introduces the fundamental principles of burn injury management. Following a theoretical overview and demonstration, participants will engage in a hands-on session where they will learn how to assess and classify burn wounds, perform surgical debridement and apply various wound coverage techniques, including skin grafting.

Experience level: Recommended for junior surgical residents and medical students in the Master's programme with a strong interest in general and burn surgery.