

# Under Fire: Tactical Medical Support for SWAT Operations

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# Today's Discussion at a Glance

With an in depth look at tactical medicine in law enforcement operations, our goal is to provide public officials with a comprehensive risk management perspective of this unique exposure. A well-rounded understanding of key considerations is essential to effectively reduce liability.

- **Introductions and session objectives**
- **Background: History of SWAT**
- **Growth & Evolution of SWAT**
- **Tactical Medical Support Options**
- **Hazards Associated with SWAT Operations**
- **Managing Risks Associated with Tactical Medicine**
- **Candidate Selection & Training**
- **Program Oversight & Medic Supervision**
- **Concluding Comments / Q&A**

# Background: History of SWAT

- **1964: Philadelphia Bank Robberies**
- **1965: Watts Riots**
- **1966: Texas Tower Shooting**
- **1969: Black Panthers**
- **1972: NYPD Hostage Negotiation Unit**
- **1974: SLA Shootout**
- **1980s: War on Drugs**
- **1999: Columbine**
- **2001: Post-9/11**

# Growth & Evolution of SWAT

- **1984: 26% of municipalities 25,000 – 50,000<sup>x</sup>**
- **2005: 80% of municipalities 25,000 – 50,000<sup>x</sup>**
- **Multijurisdictional Partnerships**
- **Types of Operations**
- **1980: 3000 SWAT Operations<sup>y</sup>**
- **2015: 80,000 SWAT Operations<sup>y</sup>**

**x source: US Department of Justice**

**y source: Rutherford Institute**

# Tactical Medical Support

- **Self Aid/Buddy Aid**
- **Tactical Medics**
- **EMS Support**
- **Doctors**

[Video: News Report on SWAT Doctors \(Fox\)](#)

# Hazards Facing SWAT Teams

- **Assault (Sharp Edge and Gunfire)**
- **Fire and Explosions**
- **Narcotics & Other Hazardous Substances**
- **Hazardous Environments**

[Video: SWAT Team Fentanyl \(WTNH\)](#)

# Risks Associated with Tactical Medicine

- **Medical Malpractice**
- **Workers Comp / Injured on Duty**
- **Law Enforcement Liability**
- **General Liability**
- **Reputational Risk**

# Candidate Selection & Training

- **Determine Level of Care**
- **Armed or Unarmed**
- **Uniformed or No Uniform**
- **Officer Rank Considerations**
- **Qualifications and Vetting**
- **Training**
- **Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC)**

[Video: Ft Worth Tactical Medic Program \(WFAA\)](#)



# Program Oversight & Supervision

- **Medical Director**
- **Whose Policies and Procedures to Follow?**
- **Who Directly Supervises the Medic/Doctor?**
- **What color badge does Doctor wear?**
- **Briefings and After Action Reports**
- **Accountability**
- **Documentation**
- **When things go bad**

# Concluding Comments / Q&A

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