

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In wars, far more soldiers are incapacitated by disease than by wounds. In tropical operations, bacterial and fungal skin conditions are often disabling. Tropical heat, high humidity, and prolonged exposure to water and mud often damage the skin, the body's protective layer. Rubbing of gear and clothing against the soggy skin produces raw and inflamed areas. Bacteria and fungi have an ideal climate in which to multiply. Lesions spread quickly over the body's surface, consequently the skin becomes uncomfortable and sometimes tender. The patient may experience fever and chills and movement, such as walking, may grow painfully difficult.

This manual will enable you, as an enlisted medical specialist, to prevent and treat tropical skin diseases. It proposes proper skin care techniques, and suggests appropriate wearing apparel to keep soldiers from becoming casualties of skin diseases. In addition, the manual outlines practical, effective, and safe treatments and medications to use when the skin is damaged. They are mentioned in the text by number and are described in the Appendix.

This manual is in accordance with the following International Standardization Agreements which are identified by type of agreement and number at the beginning of each appropriate chapter:

	NATO	CENTO SEATO
TITLE	STANAG	STANAG STANAG
Medical Training in First Aid Basic Hygiene and Emer- gency Care	2122	2122 2122

Metric measurements used throughout this publication are approximate equivalents of the customary units of measurement and are provided for the convenience of the reader.

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