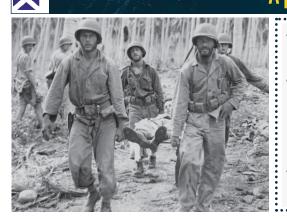


### NAVY MEDICINE FAST FACTS Soth Anniversary BATTLE OF OKINAWA April 1 - June 22, 1945



April 2025



- The Battle of Okinawa (Operation Iceberg) was the largest amphibious assault in the Pacific War and one of the deadliest battles of World War II.
- The Tenth Army was the primary ground force used to take the island. It was comprised of U.S. Army XXIV Corps (responsible for the southern part of the island) and U.S. Marine Corps III Amphibious Corps (responsible for the northern part of the island).
- Japanese forces mounted a fierce resistance to the Allied effort, notably employing fortified defenses and deadly kamikaze attacks.

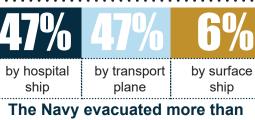
### WHERE WAS NAVY MEDICINE AT THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA?

- Aboard 580+ warships of the Fifth Fleet that pounded Japanese fortifications, cleared the way for landings and transported the 10th Army to the fight.
  - Embedded with the 1st, 2nd, 6th Marine Divisions with the Marine Corps III Amphibious Corps. This included the 1st and 6th Marine Division hospitals, and two evacuation hospitals.
  - Aboard over 25+ medical ships designated for evacuation and hospital care / treatment including 15 hospital ships, 8 landing ship tank, hospitals (LST(H)s), and 2 evacuation transports.

Serving with Naval Air Transport Service (NATS) aircraft as air evacuation nurses and hospital corpsmen.

# **MEDICAL EVACUATION**





24,900+ casualties from Okinawa during the 82-day battle **180,000+** U.S. personnel supporting Okinawa operations

**12,500+** U.S. service personnel killed at Okinawa. Including 15 Navy physicians, 1 dentist and 162 hospital corpsmen attached to Marine Divisions, and ships offshore.



## NAVY MEDICINE FAST FACTS





**"Kamikaze Attack" by Richard M. Gibney** National Museum of the Marine Corps

#### KAMIKAZE ATTACKS

- Ships of the Fifth Fleet were subject to almost unrelenting attacks from kamikazes (suicide pilots of the Japanese Special Attack Corps). By the end of the battle, 112+ Navy ships were subject to kamikaze attacks and 12 were sunk. Chief wounds encountered from the kamikaze attacks were flash burns and shrapnel wounds. The kamikaze attacks led to shortages of
- medical personnel in the fleet. Casualties among medical officers and corpsmen required frequent replacements from medical staff aboard transports.
- On April 28, the hospital ship USS Comfort and evacuation transport USS Pinkney received direct hits from kamikaze planes — 29 people were killed aboard Comfort and 22 aboard Pinkney.

# **MEDICAL HEROES**

- Navy medical personnel at Okinawa were awarded 3 Medals of Honor (MoH), 9 Navy Crosses, and 48 Silver Stars.
- PhM1c William Halyburton (1924-1945). Fought back an enemy charge and continued to attend to casualties while administering aid under heavy enemy fire, until succumbing to mortal wounds. MoH recipient (posthumous).
- HA1c Fred Lester (1926-1945). Despite being repeatedly wounded, Lester crawled under heavy enemy fire to rescue a fallen Marine, and then selflessly instructed others in his treatment. Realizing his own wounds were fatal, he refused aid and directed the care of two more wounded Marines before succumbing to his injuries. MoH recipient (posthumous).
- HA2c Robert Bush (1926-2005). Bush repeatedly braved danger to treat wounded Marines, including defending a wounded officer with his pistol and a carbine after being critically wounded himself. He refused medical treatment until his patient was evacuated, ultimately collapsing from his injuries after his heroic actions. MoH recipient.

