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Local police use blood-clotting agent to save lives

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A Gainesville Police officer helped save the lives of eight people by putting together a trauma kit containing items used by the U.S Military.

About a year and a half ago, GPD Chief Norman Botsford asked several officers how the department was going to combat the rise in violence.

"My suggestion was to create a trauma kit and train all GPD personnel on how to use it," Sgt. Dan Stout said.

Although administrators and detectives are also trained to use the kits, only uniformed patrol carry them, Stout said.

He said his motive for putting the kit together stems from his background as a paramedic and his military experience.

"I served as a medic on the SWAT team," Stout said. "And when I was in the military, I lost a lot of people that I knew."

The first priority of the kits was to treat officers injured on duty, but the kits have been used on victims and criminals.

The kit's most innovative ingredient is Celox, an agent that helps control life-threatening bleeding.

"It is not meant for the little scrapes and boo-boos," he said. "It is a resort of last means that clots arterial bleeding when nothing else is working."

Celox was used in Alachua County on gunshot and knife wounds and also motor vehicle accidents.

"It has been used with limited capacity by the SWAT team for five years," Stout said. "Since we have done the training, it gives officers and their families a lot more confidence that they will be returning home at the end of their shifts."

In the spring of 2008, Stout said the Alachua County Sheriff's Office and the GPD responded to a bank robbery.

"The suspect attempted to kill himself by slicing his throat with a box cutter," Stout said. "This was the first time GPD used Celox, and we saved his life."

By seeing the effect of the clotting agent, ASO approached Stout and asked him if he could create trauma kits for the department and train its deputies.

Twenty-four hours after Stout taught the ASO deputies how to use the kits, they put their training into practice.

"They used the Celox to clot the blood of a motorcyclist who had to have his leg amputated at the scene," he said.

Stout said GPD is the first law enforcement agency to deploy the kits the way they did by training all of its employees and having all uniformed patrol carrying them in their cars.

The kits also include a military tourniquet and a bandage meant for bullet or stab wounds to the chest.

All eight residents treated with the kit have survived.

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