

DIY Medical Emergency Kit Basics

Building your kit:

Step 1: Identifying your needs

- o Know the who, what, when, where and why of your kit
1. WHO is the kit for?
 - a. One person, family, kids, elderly, etc.- impacts the size/content of the kit
 2. WHAT/WHEN do you anticipate using the kit?
 - a. ID possible medical/trauma related risks you're likely to be faced with
 - i. General/everyday kit, specialized for needs related to your work, where you live, etc.
 1. Ex: Regularly visiting a gun range vs. working from home will likely influence a kit's contents
 2. Risks you face at home vs. car trip, etc.
 3. How far are you from the nearest place source of medical attention (influences how long you're likely going to have to care for yourself or others without medical support)
 3. WHERE do you plan on storing the kit?
 - a. House, vehicle, purse, bug-out bag, etc.
 - i. Larger kits can be kept at home or in the trunk of the car vs. smaller kits in a purse or center console in the car
 4. WHY do you want to prepare a kit?
 - a. How prepared do you want to be to deal with medical emergencies?
 - b. This dictates how basic/complex your kit(s) are (and how large)
 - i. Ex: Handling cuts/bruises vs. handling almost any pre-hospital situation

Step 2: Selecting a container for the kit(s) – based on where it will be stored

- o Waterproof pouch, tackle box, backpack, etc. – something sturdy
- o Storage pockets, zippered or Velcro openings, etc. to avoid having to waste time finding what's needed
- o Easy to grab and carry around

Step 3: Organize and label like items

- o Easily locate what's needed
- o Utilize & label re-sealable freezer bags, makeup bags, etc. to group like items together
 - o Ex: Band-Aids, antibiotic ointments, gauze pads & rolls, etc.
- o Ensure you have reminders to regularly check supplies in kit

Typical Situations/Conditions to Plan for:

- Burns
- Cuts
- Abrasions (scrapes)
- Stings
- Splinters
- Sprains (tissue connecting one bone to another)
- Strains (muscle to bone)
- Fever
- Nasal congestion
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Mild pain
- Skin problems
- Headaches
- Allergies
- Gastrointestinal problems

Items to consider including: (aim to keep the kit as simple as possible - stock with multiuse items)

- Adhesive tape
- Anesthetic spray (Bactine, Calamine, etc. for itching and insect bites)
- 4"x4" sterile gauze pads (cleaning/covering wounds, eye patch, etc.)
- 2", 3" & 4" Ace bandages (wrapping sprained/strained joints, wrapping wounds, wrapping splints, etc.)
- Adhesive bandages (variety of sizes)
- Benadryl for allergic reactions, itching
- Exam gloves (protect against infection, make ice packs by filling with water & freezing – store gloves in re-sealable plastic bags to keep them clean and easy to carry vs. box)
- Antibiotic cream
- Cough medication
- Aspirin (for mild pain, heart attack, etc.)
- Pain medication (Tylenol, Aleve, etc.)
- Pedialyte (dehydration)
- Antacid
- Nasal decongestant
- Personal medications
- Anti-diarrheal
- Hand sanitizer

- Hand soap
- Dental kit (broken teeth, loss of crown or filling)
- Iodine
- Eye wash
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Basic Supplies:

- Cigarette lighter (sterilize instruments)
- Non-adhesive pads for covering wounds & burns
- Plastic trash bags (contain contaminated articles, keep dry, etc.)
- Safety pins (secure triangular bandage sling, help splinter removal, etc.)
- Scissors
- Triangular bandage (use as a sling, towel, tourniquet, etc.)
- Tweezers (splinter, stinger or tick removal)
- List of family member's medical info, medications, doctors, insurance co, contact people, etc.
- First aid how to information
- Small flashlight
- Insect repellent
- Swiss Army knife
- Moleskin for blisters
- Personal medical equipment (ex: cane, knee/wrist brace, etc.)
- Plastic re-sealable bags (multiple sizes)
- Thermometer
- Antiseptic wipes to clean around wounds
- Bandanas (multiple uses – tourniquet, bandage, etc.)
- BleedStop (powder to help blood clot to stop bleeding)
- Duct tape (create a splint, wrap a sprain, keep gauze in place, pressure bandage with a wadded up shirt, etc.)
- Emergency blankets (keep injured person warm)
- Paint sticks (makeshift splint)
- Plastic wrap (bandage cover, makeshift sling, etc.)
- Alcohol wipes
- Super glue
- Syringes for irrigating
- Scalpel
- Suturing kit
- Washcloths (absorb blood, pressure bandages, padding for makeshift crutch, etc.)
- Antibiotics
- Instant ice packs (activate by shaking when needed)
- Medical scissors
- Magnifying glass (closer look at a wounded area or help create a heat source to disinfect medical items)
- Hard alcohol (natural disinfectant, reduce pain)

- High filtration mask
- Goggles
- Head lamp (illuminate area in a medical emergency)
- Band-Aids (preferably cloth/waterproof)
- Liquid bandage
- Bulb suction for flushing wounds

Natural Products to consider including:

- Aloe Vera Gel - burns
- Witch Hazel – itching, bug bites, germs, clean cuts/scrapes
- Lavender Oil – antiseptic, anti-inflammatory
- Apple Cider Vinegar – skin irritations and infections
- Ginger Capsules Or Candies - antioxidant, antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, anti-nausea, antiviral, anti-fungal, coughing
- Clove Oil – antiseptic, tooth pain
- Arnica Oil – sore muscles, sprains, strains
- Chamomile – tea = indigestion, lotion = rashes, oil = burns, bruises, headache (topical)
- Activated Charcoal – ingest capsules or apply topically
- Baking Soda – ingest or apply as a paste
- Coconut oil – antifungal, chapped lips, dry skin, base for salves
- Epsom salt – remove splinters easier by soaking skin for 15 min.
- Hydrogen peroxide – ear infections
- Garlic oil – ear infections, parasites
- Garlic pills (natural antibiotic when prescription antibiotics aren't available)
- Tea Tree oil (aids in wound healing)
- Raw honey – antibiotic ointment, sore throat/cough
- Spices
 - Basil – headaches
 - Cardamom – clear congestion (used as a tea)
 - Cinnamon – Ceylon cinnamon clears congestion, digestion, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic
 - Turmeric – antibiotic, helps immune system