

Natural First Aid

This booklet is not designed to provide advice on the treatment of individual cases. It is an educational program providing information about alternatives. We highly recommend that alternative therapies be used in conjunction with orthodox medicine in the treatment of many illnesses and especially in an emergency situation.

First aid kits are used to help until medical help arrives and for the smaller self-help issues that do not require professional medical attention. Unfortunately, with some catastrophes, such as floods, earthquakes, & severe weather, they may be your only medical aid, so being prepared is important. Accidents are the 4th leading cause of death in the US today, ranking behind heart disease, cancer and stroke. Therefore, it is essential to be prepared.

In cases of severe injury, first aid is performed to prevent death by: Preventing further injury, Counteracting shock, Restoring breathing, Controlling bleeding, and Removing poisons.

General Rules:

1. Recognize your limitations - only do what you can while you are waiting.
2. Evaluate the victim - check them over thoroughly, rather than assuming the most evident. Also, look for medical ID tags.
3. Keep the victim lying down, unless he is vomiting, bleeding from mouth, or experiencing breathing difficulties. Don't move a victim unless you have to.
4. Reassure victims. The best way is to stay calm yourself.

First Step - Assess the victim before you begin any lifesaving techniques.

Triage - the process of sorting multiple casualties into priority for medical care. *(The victims who are complaining the most are usually those who are the least injured.)*

Assess: Look for life threatening situations.

1. YOURSELF - electric lines, oncoming traffic, violence, etc
2. VICTIM - Breathing difficulties, cardiac arrest, severe bleeding, head injuries, open abdominal or chest wounds, shock, or other medical problems (diabetic coma, poisoning, etc.).

A **home medicine cabinet** is more than a first aid kit, although first aid supplies should be in the cabinet. It also needs to have remedies for coughs, colds, flu and any other ailments the family is commonly prone to catch. It is vitally important to keep a good supply of basic natural health remedies on hand, since you can't get them from the local grocery or drug store and health food stores are often closed on weekends.

As you will see the list could be endless, but start with the basics, then add what you find would benefit you and your family the most. The selection will vary depending on if you are talking about a hike or traveling kit, a car kit, or a kit for your home use.

First Aid Kit Supplies:

First thing - a **container** - a large fishing tackle box is great; standing the test of time as the most cost effective, convenient, easy to use means of putting a first aid or home medicine chest together. Size is up to you based on need- car kit, college pack, home resource center. They are portable, plus compartmentalized with different sized spaces for differing items. Other options are a plastic sewing box, makeup box, small suitcase, or school craft kit/box.

What to stock it with:

- **First Aid book or pamphlet** - to remind you of steps and help guide you
- **Bandages** - gauze roll and pads, adhesive tape, cotton balls, Ace elastic wrap, sanitary pads, and triangular bandages.
- **Cold Pack** - instant mix so it can cool without ice present.

- **Swiss army knife** that has **scissors, knife, and tweezers** or separate items.
- **Needles** (I use those small free sewing kits that we get at fairs/expos.) & **safety pins**
- **Flashlight** - possibly even extra batteries.
- **Gloves** - Disposable, preferably latex free.
- **Miscellaneous items** such as **ink pen, note paper, quarters, lighter or matches.**
- **Water bottle or cup**

Possible Supplements to include:

Activated Charcoal - absorbs poisons, both internal & external; absorbs gas and relieves bloating. It is also excellent for diarrhea & food poisoning. Use topically for spider bites & stings.

Aloe Vera Gel – for sunburn, scratches, minor skin irritations, cooling, protective, and a laxative when used internally.

Black Ointment – a gentle drawing salve that pulls pus and infection out of the skin. Helpful for skin blemishes, acne, boils, cyst, warts, and dermatitis. Can help draw out slivers and can be useful for moles and skin cancers.

Capsicum - tincture form is faster acting and more easily applied, but powder works also. Used internally for shock, topically on open wounds to control bleeding, externally to increase circulation after exposure to cold and combine with lobelia to relieve pain.

Clay–Redmond or Green – use externally as poultice to draw out toxins.

Distress Remedy - a flower essence that aids recovery from both emotional and physical shock. Use internally after injury or anxiety and topically it speeds tissue healing in cuts, bumps, & swellings.

Ginger - for nausea or motion sickness; warming to body.

Golden Seal - powder for wounds or infection in gums, or sniff the powder for sinus infections.

Healing AC Cream - has Arnica & Calendula which reduces swelling, stops bruising, and speeds tissue healing. Do not use on deep wounds as it causes too rapid healing; deep wounds must have time to drain.

Helichrysim Essential oil - for neck injuries and nerve damage.

Lavendar Essential Oil - is calming, easing tension and cramping. Also, mix with aloe vera gel for burns.

Lobelia - calms the nerves, relaxes muscles and reduces spasms or convulsive incidents. Eases asthma attacks and tension headaches. Relaxes the body during panic attacks and stress. Larger doses help induce vomiting. Is best in extract or tincture form.

Nature's Fresh Enzyme Spray - Although this is supposed to be a stain remover; it also makes a great first aid spray for injuries, sunburns, stings, and many other problems.

Papaya Mints or Stomach Comfort - for nausea and indigestion.

Peppermint Oil - settles stomach & helps alertness (esp while driving). Use in water or straight.

Recover - Apply externally in carrier oil for pain.

Sample sizes or small well-labeled packs of medicines/ herbs that you may desire to have–(ie **Ibuprofen, IF Relief**).

Silver Shield liquid and gel – a natural antiseptic shown to kill every pathogenic microbe known. Liquid can be taken internally, applied topically, used in eyes and ears, or sprayed on the throat or into the sinuses. Its effectiveness is increased through length of contact on the infected area. Gel is for wounds; though also used for gums, eyes, etc.

Slippery Elm – reduces constipation, diarrhea & IBS, and drink in water to soothe & coat sore throat. Moisten as paste to promote healing on bed sores. Mix with charcoal as poultice to help it stay on area longer.

Tea Tree Oil – a topical disinfectant /antiseptic. Apply directly to cuts, scrapes, burns, boils & other injuries. Dilute in water and gargle to help sore throat. Dilute 1 drop in 10 drops olive oil for ear drops. Use with matches to sterilize needles.

Tei Fu Oil – a topical analgesic used for bruises, aching muscles, bites, stings, & cold sores. Rub into neck and temples for tension headaches. Also, use as inhalant for congestion (apply to palms, rubbed together, cup hands over nose & breathe).

In this article we have offered a variety of suggestions for dealing with common ailments from an herbalist approach. These herbs and suggestions have been drawn from traditional, contemporary, and our own experiences and have historically been of great value to those who have used them. Please remember that it is always much easier for your body to heal itself when ailments are addressed early. Herbs are foods which serve to change the environment of the body. The longer the environment is friendly to foreign intruders the longer it will take to return the environment to its normal state, thus increasing the time it takes to heal. Therefore, focus on prevention, be prepared, seek medical help when necessary, and don't delay in use of appropriate supplements to promote rapid recovery.

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