

Pack up your troubles in a first-aid kit

Make sure you have a well-stocked first-aid kit to deal with any minor injuries that could befall your family this holiday season.

By [Graham Anderson](#) 6 Dec 2011



The holiday season is filled with fun, laughter and adventures. However, this increase in outdoor activities and being far from home can come with its fair share of minor mishaps as well.

To deal with these mishaps during the holidays, you need to be prepared.

While nothing can replace the advice of medical professionals like doctors or pharmacists, when you're far from home (or even when you're not), it's worth having a well-stocked first-aid kit as the first line of defence when an injury occurs

A well-stocked first-aid kit should contain:

- Absorbent gauze dressings
- Adhesive tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Stretch bandages in various sizes
- Anti-bacterial ointment to promote wet healing, which is less painful and minimises scarring
- Hydrocortisone cream for the treatment of bites, stings or other skin irritations
- Tweezers
- A sharp pair of scissors
- A thermometer
- A few pairs of latex gloves
- Saline solution
- Eye drops
- Painkillers
- Antacids
- Antihistamines
- Anti-inflammatory cream
- Gel ice-pack
- Sterile gel burn dressings in various sizes
- First aid manual
- Blanket (obviously this won't fit in the kit)

For children:

Remember that child-safe medications might be difficult to come by if you are far from home, so stock up on painkillers, anti-inflammatories and cold medication so that you can treat any ailment that might come up.

Interesting sticky plasters are a good idea to keep minor cuts or scratches clean and to distract a child from their injury.

For the holidays:

Although one of the most important items in your beach bag should be sunblock, it's not a bad idea to take along a bottle of after-sun cream for the person who spends too long outdoors without reapplying it.

Also remember to stock up on any prescription medication or items that you need for specific ailments you may have to avoid having to search for them or track down a prescription on holiday. Be particularly mindful of taking along medication like antihistamines for bee sting allergies, which you don't take all the time, but will need to lay your hands on immediately should a sting occur.

If you are going somewhere where there are likely to be mosquitoes, take along an effective repellent, and make sure to check if you need malaria prophylaxis.

First aid at a serious accident

Everyone - especially parents - should do a first-aid course to know exactly what to do at the scene of an accident or household or outdoor injury; St John, for example, runs excellent courses. Once you have done such a course, there are additional first aid items you may need, like a one-way mouthpiece for performing CPR. Most courses will run you through what you should have in your first-aid kit to support you in the application of your training.

Nobody wants to go on holiday fearing the worst, but it's always a good idea to be prepared. A little planning can go a long way to treating your family's injuries without a fuss.

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