

## **First Aid Kit General Considerations**      Cindy Mcjunkin

There isn't one all-purpose medical kit that will work for everyone in all situations. There are many variables to consider when packing a kit. Think about the type of activity, the group size, distance, time you expect your trip to take, and the availability of evacuation.

It would be impossible to have a kit with everything you would need; realize that you will have to improvise to some degree in most emergency situations. Items that are versatile or those brought for other purposes such as safety pins, gauze, duct tape, and bandanas can replace specific items.

After your kit is assembled, it's important to protect your supplies from the elements and to keep the items organized so that you are able to find what you need quickly.

Commercially prepared kits are available, but you will need to modify them to your trip needs. Look at <http://www.adventuremedicalkits.com/> and <http://www.wildernessmedical.com/>

Each hiker should be responsible for his or her own personal medications for preexisting medical conditions. Those who have specific needs such as allergies to bee stings or diabetes are expected to advise the leader and carry their own medications.

Weight considerations- how much is enough?

### Items to carry to prevent difficult/emergency situations:

Water filter, blister prevention, purification tablets, nonsterile gloves, sunscreen, soap, insect repellent, oral rehydration packets (or table salt), and extra food.

Useful tools: safety pins, zip-lock bags, headlamp, syringe for irrigating wounds, scissors, tweezers, and tongue blades.

Medications: NSAIDS (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as Ibuprofen), Benadryl 500-100 mg, Epi-pen as prescribed by physician. Aspirin.

Items for Wound Care: nonsterile gloves, wound closure strips, alcohol swabs, band-aids, moleskin, large dressing, 4 x 4 gauze, iodine solution, antiseptic towelettes, antibiotic ointment, sterile dressing cloth or duct tape, elastic bandage (ace), Q-tip, eye pad, triangular bandage (or bandanna), gauze wrap, Tegaderm dressing.

Survival items: ID/pencil/notepad, flashlight, map/compass, matches/lighter, knife/multi-tool, nylon cord, whistle, space blanket.

In-vehicle medical kit available at trailhead contains these additional items, and adapted specifically for the trip: additional gloves, blankets, extra food/water, battery cables, long burning candles, tarp, and shovel.