



First Aid Kit

A must-have in every home, a well-stocked first aid kit enables you to administer care in the event of a minor injury. It also allows you to provide basic first aid while waiting for emergency services to arrive when a more serious injury occurs.

Keeping all the essential items together in a small bag or case is very handy.

Basic first aid supplies

A first aid kit should include:

- Bandage scissors
- Tweezers or splinter forceps
- Safety pins
- Sterile adhesive bandages
- Sterile gauze pads of various sizes
- Sterile compress pressure bandages
- Triangular bandages
- Roll of first aid tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Rolls of sterile gauze bandages of various sizes

Useful items

In addition to the basic supplies, it is recommended that you supplement the first aid kit with items that are useful to have at home, such as:

- A digital thermometer (or two if one is used for taking rectal temperature)
- An ice pack for pain and swelling
- A hot pack to relieve pain
- Sterile gloves
- Elastic bandages
- Adhesive tape to secure dressings and bandages
- A graduated cup or syringe to measure the amount of liquid medication to administer
- A first aid guide and contact information for emergency services

The home medicine cabinet

To treat common ailments, several products and medications are a must in every medicine cabinet.

Here is a list of must-have medications to have on hand:

Medication	Use
Acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol, Tempra) and ibuprofen (e.g., Advil, Motrin)	To relieve fever, pain and headaches
Antihistamine (e.g., Benadryl, Claritin, Reactine, Allegra)	To treat allergic reactions
Antibiotic cream or ointment (e.g., Polysporin)	To prevent minor skin infections
Antinausea (e.g., Gravol)	To relieve nausea
Hydrocortisone cream or ointment 0.5% (e.g., Cortate)	To relieve itching caused by insect bites, skin irritations or mild eczema
Antidiarrheal (e.g., Imodium)	To treat diarrhea

Medication	Use
Oral rehydration solution (e.g., Pedialyte, Gastrolyte)	To prevent dehydration in the event of diarrhea or vomiting
Seawater nasal spray or drops (e.g., Salinex, Sinus Rinse, hydraSense)	To decongest, cleanse or moisturize the nose. Can also be used to clean wounds.
Antacid (e.g., Tums, Pepcid, Zantac)	To relieve acid reflux and heartburn
Zinc oxide cream (e.g., Zincofax, Penaten)	To treat diaper rash and other types of irritation
Artificial tears (e.g., Systane, Refresh Tears)	To relieve dry eyes and symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis
Sunscreen with SPF of at least 30	To protect the skin from the sun's rays
Epinephrine (e.g., EpiPen)	If one or more family members have severe allergic reactions

Medication should be stored in a dry, enclosed area and at room temperature (unless otherwise specified). Rather than storing medication in the bathroom, store it in a kitchen or laundry room cabinet or in a bedroom closet, for example. Keep all medications in their original containers, out of reach of children.

Once a year, go through the various medications and check the expiration dates. If anything is expired, do not throw in the garbage or flush down the toilet. Simply take back to the pharmacist for safe disposal. Caution, some medications are considered to be expired before the date on the packaging (e.g., eyedrops - once open).

Emergency services

To save precious time in an emergency situation, keep a list of emergency phone numbers in your first aid kit. You can find the contact information of your provincial poison centre on the Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres' website at www.capcc.ca.

Also, be sure to add contact information for your pharmacist, family doctor and dentist to your list of emergency phone numbers.