

## BE Prepared: First Aid Kits

No home or vehicle should be without a basic first aid kit and no Emergency Kit is complete without one. You may purchase a first aid kit at almost any department store or order one through the Red Cross at [redcrossstore.org](http://redcrossstore.org). However, you can also create your own first aid kit.

According to the Red Cross, a basic first aid kit should include at least:

- 20) adhesive bandages, various sizes
- (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing
- (1) conforming roller gauze bandage
- (2) triangular bandages
- (2) 3 x 3 sterile gauze pads
- (2) 4 x 4 sterile gauze pads
- (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage
- (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- (6) antiseptic wipes
- (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves
- Adhesive tape, 2" width
- Anti-bacterial ointment
- Cold pack
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield

Some additional items that you might want to include are:

- Any needed medication (i.e. asthma inhalers, allergy medication, epinephrine injection)
- Plastic gloves
- Filter type paper face masks
- Bulky nonsterile absorbent dressing
- Tissues, cotton swabs, and cotton balls
- Aspirin and nonaspirin (acetaminophen) pain reliever (do not give aspirin to children or teens)
- Ibuprofen may also be included, anti-diarrheal medication (tablet form of loperamide is probably best)
- Infant or junior ibuprofen for children as needed
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of ipecac (to be used to induce vomiting only if advised by a Poison Control Center, ER, family physician etc.)
- A simple first aid guide (such as the Red Cross Basic Guidebook)

Once completed, make a list of the contents. Include expiration dates, in order of expiration. Replace items as they become outdated. Everyone in your family that is old enough to do some basic first aid should have a general idea of what is inside the first aid kit and how to use it. However, the kit may contain the medications listed above and/or sharp objects. So, it should be placed out of reach of any small children.

A carry along storage container, tackle box or back pack may be used to store a home-assembled kit that can easily be grabbed with your "To Go" Kit (discussed in next month's article).

For more information on keeping your family safe and healthy, call Aitkin County Health & Human Services at 927-7200 or 800-328-3744 or visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).