



Ultralight Minimalist 1st Aid Kit – 1 Person, 1 Week

Medications and Topical:

- 2 – Ibuprofen (200 mg), Pkg./2
- 2 – Acetaminophin (325 mg), Pkg./2
- 4 – Antihistamine (Diphenhydramine 25 mg)
- 2 – Oral Electrolyte Packets (CeraLyte, CeraSport, Gatorade)
- Personal Prescription Medications, Sting kits, etc.
- Insect Repellent, Optional
- Sun Screen, Optional

Your brain is the most important survival and first-aid tool you have!

Wound Care:

- 3 – Antiseptic Towelette (Scrapes and Cuts)
- 5 – Bandage, Adhesive, Fabric, 1" x 3"
- 3 – Bandage, Adhesive, Fabric, Knuckle
- 2 – Triple Antibiotic Ointment Packets
- 2 – Bandage, Butterfly Closure or Steri-Strip
- 4 – Dressing, Gauze, Sterile, 2" x 2", Pkg./2
- 2 – Compress Bandage (Ultra-Thin Feminine Hygiene Pad)
- 1 – Medical Tape, ½" x 10 Yards
- 1 – Moleskin, 2" x 3"
- 2 – Med. to Lrg. Safety Pins
- 2 – Quart Size Zip Top Bag



"I'll have an ounce of prevention."

Wound Cleaning - Antiseptic wipes

I tend to consider wound cleaning to be a nice-to-have rather than essential. Cleaning a wound lowers the probability of infection. Clean water can also be used for wound cleaning as can your toothbrush (if first sterilized with the wipe or alcohol hand gel from your personal hygiene kit).

Small Wound Treatment – Bandages / Moleskin

Band-Aids will take care of small wounds that might be worth treating due to infection risk. Moleskin is preferably used to prevent a blister rather than to treat one. It should be applied as soon as you feel a hot spot rather than waiting until it is unbearable.

Medium Wound Treatment - Steri-Strip / Butterfly Closure / Gauze

Steri-Strips and Butterfly Closures are small strips of adhesive-coated plastic that help to close up a larger wound. They are the commercial version of the type of thing used in hospitals. They are not going to close all wounds and they are not going to be 100% perfect on some parts of the body but for the majority of the simple types of cuts that you might receive - a V-cut - they will be good enough until you can seek proper medical care.



Large Wound Treatment - Safety Pins / Compress Bandage

If something is too big to close with Steri-strip I would sacrifice a piece of clothing to make an adhoc bandage. I might also sacrifice a spare bootlace or piece of nylon cord to fix it in place. The safety pins can be used to produce an adhoc bandage.

For heavy bleeding, Compress Bandages can be tied or taped in place to stem the flow long enough to seek proper medical assistance. Feminine Hygiene Pads are an excellent lightweight and inexpensive alternative to commercially available compress bandages.

In the unlikely event of a severed appendage you should recover it, if you can safely do so, and store it in one of the Zip Top bags as a doctor may be able to reattach whatever it is you lost.

Insect Bites - 4 Antihistamine tablets

Most insect bites can be ignored. If you have a lot of bites on one day or are allergic to some insect then an antihistamine tablet will take away the worst of the irritation. You can also use topical treatments and I sometimes carry small packets of Hydrocortisone.

Headaches - 4 Acetaminophen tablets

Pain is your friend. Pain helps to prevent you making an injury worse. To override your own pain is to potentially increase your risks.

For headaches and miscellaneous harmless pain I carry a few Acetaminophen (Tylenol). It is worth mentioning that if you are popping a pill on the trail because of a headache it is going to be worth thinking very hard if there is a cause for the headache - such as low blood sugar or dehydration - which if treated will alleviate the headache.

It is a separate subject but it is important to be aware of what your own symptoms are for dehydration and low blood sugar levels. Low blood sugar levels are caused by you burning mainly fat and can cause you to have insufficient glucose in your system to keep your brain working efficiently. Eating glucose tablets (or glucose-rich food) will clear a headache caused by low-blood sugar. A couple of jelly beans can quickly clear your head if you are suffering from low blood-sugar.

Other Pain and Inflammation - 4 Ibuprofen 200mg tablets

Ibuprofen is a pain-relief and anti-inflammatory drug. It is good for the relief of and recovery of sore muscles and joints.

Again, it should not be used to mask symptoms. You have to consider if it is better not to take any drug at all. For instance if your knee is causing you pain there might be a very good reason for it - such as footwear issues.

You can use Ibuprofen as a temporary measure to suppress the pain caused by injury sufficiently to allow you to travel to safety. Of course, by doing this you risk an increase to both the injury and the recovery time but that is a trade-off you might have to make in the real world.

Food Poisoning / Dehydration – 2 Oral Electrolyte Pkgs

CeraSport and CeraLyte are brand names for a treatment which is basically a packet of essential salt and minerals that the body can lose through Diarrhea or dehydration.

The main issue with Diarrhea is that you lose a lot of fluids and it tends to ruin your bodies electrolytic balance - which means that you feel tired, exhausted and often have headaches. Something like CeraSport is very effective - much more so than many sports drinks, and is also relatively cheap.

Anything else

Insect Repellent and Sun Screen are a personal choice and seasonal. If you choose to carry either make certain they are isolated from the rest of your kit in case of leaks and carry small quantities, a little goes a long way and you don't need the extra weight of the Economy Size bottle.

The two Zip Top Bags are to water proof and maintain sterility of your kit, double protection. These can also be cut open and used to wrap a bandage to keep it dry if necessary.

You may see that I have not included scissors in my kit. I always carry a good knife on hiking trips.