

Home First Aid Kits

Tips For Assembling An Effective First Aid Kit

(NAPS)—Accidents can happen to anyone almost anywhere. It is important that every home, and especially those with children, have a first aid kit on hand in case of accidental injuries.

“Appropriate members of the household should know where the kit is stored and how to use each item,” said Greg Walker, MD, of the American College of Emergency Physicians. “The ‘how to’ part is critical—buy a first aid manual and read it thoroughly. The items in the kit will be of little use unless you know how to use them.”

The American College of Emergency Physicians recommends including the following items in your Home First Aid Kit, all of which are available from your local pharmacy. For the kit itself, ACEP suggests choosing a container that is clean, roomy, durable, easy to carry and simple to open—for instance, a tote bag. Medicines should be stored in their proper containers and properly marked with dosage and instructions on how and when to take them.

The kit should also include a list of the contents it contains. In addition, keep in the kit emergency phone numbers for the family physician and pediatrician, and the regional Poison Control Center. If 911 is not available, include phone numbers for emergency services such as the local police, fire department and ambulance service. Also, if family members have life-threatening allergies to food, medications or bee stings, include a list of allergies for each family member, as well as medications used by each person.

“Remember to store first aid kits in places that children can not reach, but that are easily

The American College of Emergency Physicians suggests that these items be in your Home First Aid Kit:

- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen and aspirin tablets (Aspirin should not be used to relieve flu symptoms or be taken by children.)
- Cough Suppressant
- Antihistamine
- Decongestant tablets
- Oral medicine syringe (for children)
- Activated Charcoal and Syrup of Ipecac (Use only on the advice of a Poison Control Center, physician or emergency department.)
- Bandages of assorted sizes
- Bandage closures; safety pins
- Triangular bandage
- Elastic wraps
- Gauze and adhesive tapes
- Sharp scissors with rounded tips
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Disposable, instant-activating cold packs
- Tweezers

accessible for adult family members,” said Dr. Walker. “Also, check the kit regularly to replace missing items and make sure that the items haven’t passed their expiration dates.”

ACEP also recommends taking a first-aid class, learning CPR and always seeking immediate medical attention when you need it.

For a complete list of recommended items for a Home First Aid Kit, visit ACEP’s Web site at www.acep.org.