

The Basics Of Medical Preparedness

In a world rife with ready access to affordable pharmaceutical medicines and professional medical care, many people worry about how to handle their medical needs in an emergency or after a serious catastrophe when SHTF.

Even those who enjoy robust good health or the vigor of youth should be prepared to handle basic medical emergencies if necessary. Fortunately, most of the supplies you need to be prepared are compact and can be stored in a relatively small kit.

First and foremost, if you or anyone in your family has a life-threatening dependence on a specific medication, you should do all that you can to stock up on that medication.

Most medications will last at least 3 – 6 months, so if you can stock up on a supply of medication to last that long and then continually cycle through it to keep it fresh, that's a good place to start. [Not all doctors can or will write extra prescriptions for medication](#), but some will. In any case, try to stock a bare minimum of a 2-week supply of critical medications.

An alternative to pharmaceutical medications may be to wean yourself off of them in lieu of [herbal alternatives](#) or through adaptations to your diet. Changes to the types and amounts of medication that you take should only be carried out under the supervision of a qualified doctor, but many people have been able to find relief for their medical conditions via herbal means and even through specific nutrient supplementation.

☒ A standard emergency medical kit should also contain most, if not all, of the following items:

- An emergency tourniquet or cuff to stop major blood loss from an extremity;
- Hydrogen peroxide, rubbing alcohol and/or liquid iodine for use as a topical antiseptic;
- Burn salve or another medicated ointment for treating minor burns;
- Bandages in a wide variety of sizes and types, including bandaids, gauze bandages, pads, elastic ace bandages, and adhesive tape;
- Feminine hygiene pads can also be stored for emergency medical care, as they can absorb an immense amount of blood or other fluid (from a gunshot wound, for instance) and are relatively cheap and easily accessible;
- Splinting material or a SAM splint for immobilizing or supporting fractured or broken limbs;
- A supply of various painkillers, including aspirin, ibuprofen and acetaminophen (Tylenol);
- Sturdy, sharp scissors, a thermometer and at least one good pair of tweezers;
- Suture materials for applying stitches and/or a medical stapler or steri-strips for closing minor wounds; some people even pack super glue (or equivalent) for this purpose;
- Cotton balls and cotton swabs for cleaning or dressing wounds;
- Common antibiotics such as penicillin and amoxicillin, both of which can be purchased from farm supply stores and at most local vets without a prescription;
- A quality medical field guide (and take some time to familiarize yourself with the material covered in your field guide, so that you know what it covers and what it doesn't).

There are personal adaptations and inclusions that everyone will make to their medical kit, but the items on that list are a good place to start. Many people also include miniature fire-starting kits in their medical kit, while others include activated charcoal capsules. If you or a loved one rely on an inhaler, that's another item you'll want to add to your

medical kit.

A lot of people include space blankets (also known as thermal blankets) in their medical kits, since such emergency blankets are compact, light-weight and reasonably cheap to acquire. You may also wish to include instant cooling and/or instant heating packs in your kit, and potentially a pair of warm gloves if you live in an environment where cold weather is a potential threat.

{adinsserter survivalmd}A good medical kit may also contain a magnifying glass, in case you need to get a better look at a wound or potentially as an aid to fire-starting, and a small flashlight with spare batteries. If you rely on glasses or contacts for sharp vision, you may also wish to store a spare pair of glasses and/or a backup set of contacts in your medical kit as well. In the vein of eye care, eye drops are another popular item to stock in your first aid kit even if you don't usually use them.

Outside of your well-stocked emergency kit, the best medical preparation you can make is to regain control of your health as much as possible. If you're already in fairly good health, then take precautions to stay that way and to further strengthen your immune system and your body as a whole. Those who suffer from chronic or debilitating diseases, especially those who rely on pharmaceutical medications, are the most vulnerable if or when an emergency strikes.

The quality of the food you consume can go a long way toward determining the overall state of health you enjoy. Everyone knows by now that too much junk food is liable to make one obese, that too much sugar can swiftly lead one to developing diabetes, and so on. A lot of people have found that by adjusting their diet, they could reduce or eliminate their need for pharmaceutical medications, so this is another option that you may wish to discuss with your doctor.

In the absence of pharmaceutical medicines, there are also many traditional folk remedies and herbal remedies for less severe medical ailments. These range from teas with honey to get over the common cold, to poultices that can be made for topical application to wounds. A tea made with fresh ginger can even be made to alleviate nausea and sooth intestinal discomfort.

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*This article has been written by **Gaia Rady** for [Survivopedia](#).*

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