

First Aid Kit Contents Guide



What should you put in your first aid kit?

Just as accident prevention programs are tailored to your business, your first-aid kit(s) should be tailored to your work site. When you are doing your analysis for the types of hazards existing in your work site, you should also try and visualize the types of injuries that may occur. You may not need more than the basic first-aid kit. However, you should also try and visualize other potential sources of injuries based on the type of equipment and chemicals you use in your work environment. For instance, in an office setting you may think that a paper cut is all that you need to worry about. However, you sometimes need to look beyond the obvious. For instance, are your employees required to work with any household cleaners? If they do there is always the possibility of some of the cleaner getting into someone's eyes. The emergency eyewash doesn't seem as far-fetched as you originally thought. When would you ever need burn ointment in an office setting? You may say the only equipment that my employees use is a copy machine. Do your employees ever have to clear jams in the copy machine? The heating elements in a copy machine get hot enough to cause burn injuries. Also, your office may have a coffee maker or vending machine where employees could get scalded. The bottom line is, you need to look at your work site in a worse case scenario. Remember "Murphy's Law" when making your assessment - "What ever can go wrong, will go wrong."

A basic first aid kit is designed for normal, low risk work sites (see Table 1). Different work sites may need additional first aid supplies. This guide will attempt to help identify additional items that may be beneficial to your work site.

Table 1. Sample First-aid Kit Contents

- a) 1 absorbent compress, 4x8 inches
- b) 16 adhesive bandages, 1x3 inches
- c) 1 adhesive tape, 5 yards long
- d) 10 antiseptic single-use packages, 0.5 g. application
- e) 6 burn treatment single-use packages, 0.5 g. application
- f) 1 eye covering (for two eyes)
- g) 1 eye wash, 1 fluid ounce
- h) 4 sterile pads, 3x3 inches
- i) 2 pair of medical exam gloves *
- j) 1 triangular bandage, 39x39x55 inches

***WARNING: Always use medical exam gloves when exposed to blood or other body fluids to help prevent the spread of blood borne pathogens.**



Hazard Assessment

When you, as an employer, complete your hazard assessment for your work sites, you should also assess the hazards for the types and quantities of supplies for your first aid kits. The following information may provide you with some ideas for developing your kit contents.

1. Check your surroundings for potential hazards.

Potential hazard	First aid kit consideration
Fall hazard from working on ladders, uneven terrain, etc.	Triangular bandages, ammonia inhalants, thermal space blanket (for shock), arm or wire splint
sunburn	Sun block , burn cream
biting or stinging insects	sting-kill wipes, bee and wasp spray, meat tenderizer
sprains	elastic bandages, cold packs
snake bite	snakebite kit
poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac	Calamine lotion
cuts	antiseptic swab, first aid ointment, gauze compress, elastic tape, scissors, towelettes, anti-bacterial wash, rubber gloves, tweezers
electric shock	CPR kit, thermal space blanket (for shock)
Frostbite or hypothermia	thermal space blanket
Splinters	First Aid Forceps
Amputation	Plastic garbage bags (small, medium, & large)
Dehydration & heat stroke	Bottled water
poisoning during pesticide spraying WARNING: Always read the labels on poisons for first aid requirements.	emergency and/or poison control center number, syrup of Ipecac (use only if advised by doctor or Poison Center), two one-quart containers of clean water, tongue depressors (to stir with or for seizures), two small, plastic empty jars with tight-fitting lids, can of evaporated milk (attach opener to can with rubber band), blanket (for treating shock) plastic bandages and tape (to cover contaminated areas), disposable rubber gloves, and goggles
fractures	wooden, plastic splints (1/4 X 3 X 12-15 inches), or air inflatable roll of elastic wrap (to attach splint)
seizures	tongue depressors
electrical shock	dry, sterile dressing
chemical burns	dry, sterile dressing, bottled water
insects in ear	mineral oil

2. Look for signs of things that could cause injury:

- a. When working around brush piles, stacked wood, hollow trees, eaves of houses etc., always check for snakes or signs of biting or stinging insects such as spiders, hornets, wasps, bees, etc. Many people are allergic to the venom of flying insects and first aid treatment means life or death.



- b. Look for tripping hazards such as vines, undergrowth, loose rocks or soil when working on hills and animal burrows and potholes that can cause workers to sprain or break an ankle.

- c. Learn to identify poisonous plants such as poison oak.



- d. Look for electrical wires or fences.

- e. Consider machinery and tools that can amputate, cut or severely lacerate body parts.

3. Consider the climate in which your employees will be working:

- a. Rain, ice or damp weather increases the danger of falls.



- b. Cold weather increases the risk of frostbite and dehydration.

- c. Extremely hot weather can cause dehydration or heat stroke.

4. Determine if any of your employees have medical conditions that may require special items such as Glucose tablets for diabetics.

