

Prepare for Medical Emergencies



CHALLENGE
Assemble a first-aid kit & complete a safety course.

Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Ready or not..." and "Know what to do."
2. To complete the Challenge, you must assemble at least one first-aid kit for home, work, or play by the end of the month. In addition, you should complete a course either in first aid or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
3. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

Ready or not...

You take precautions to keep you, your friends, and family safe. That's good! But sometimes – even with safety measures – people become injured. It's best to be prepared with training and a kit stocked with first-aid supplies.

Keep a first-aid kit at home that is stocked with enough supplies to take care of several first-aid situations. Also, carry a small kit with you when you drive, bike, or ride public transit. That way you'll have one at work or school or whenever you need it. It's a good idea to stash one in your camping, backpacking, and boating supplies too.

The Red Cross recommends that all first-aid kits for a family of 4 include, at a minimum, the following items:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 hypoallergenic adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 blanket (space blanket)



- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of non-latex gloves (size: large)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- 1 splint
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/non-glass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- First aid instruction booklet



Larger first-aid kits can accommodate specific needs, such as splinting a broken bone, as well as help you treat a larger number of injuries. It's a good idea to adapt each kit for its specific use. For example, if you or your family plays sports, your first-aid kit should include sport tape for injuries. A walker or cyclist could store wet wipes and tape for blisters in a sealable plastic bag and stash the mini-kit in a pocket or small pack. Here are some other ideas:

- Biodegradable soap
- Hand sanitizer
- Iodine pads
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Wet wipes
- Eye drops and saline solution
- Mole skin
- Elastic bandage roll
- Sanitary napkin (excellent for profusely bleeding wounds)
- Sport tape
- Butterfly bandages and narrow adhesive strips
- Splinting materials
- Roll of absorbent cotton as padding for a splint
- Cotton-tipped swabs
- Small plastic bags



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- Safety pens
- Hot pack
- Pain reliever
- Fever reducer
- Antihistamine
- EpiPen® (to stop allergic reactions)
- Motion sickness medicine
- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Anti-nausea medicine
- Water-sterilizing tablets or bottled water
- Activated charcoal
- Sunscreen
- Aloe vera gel
- Snakebite kit
- CPR mouthpiece
- Whistle
- Sleeping bag (to insulate an injured person from the cool ground)
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- List of emergency phone numbers (doctor, pharmacy, poison control, emergency department)



Know what to do

Would you know the signs that indicate someone's choking or what to do if someone appears to have a broken ankle? Test your knowledge by answering the following questions.

How can you tell if a bone is broken?

It's possible to move a broken limb, and it's also possible to NOT be able to move a limb that is broken. The only accurate way to diagnose a broken bone or torn ligament is with an X-ray. (If the bone is sticking out through the skin, however, you can be relatively sure that it's broken!)

What do you do for a sprained ankle?

If you twist your knee or ankle, follow the RICE principle. **R**est the injured area. For 24 hours, put **I**ce on it for 20 minutes at a time (with 20-40 minutes between each application). Lightly **C**ompress (wrap) it with a bandage, and **E**levate it above your heart. If there is swelling, do not apply heat! If you can't stand or walk, get medical help.

What do you do when you burn yourself while cooking?

If you get a first-degree burn, it's a good idea to run cold water (not butter, vinegar, or ice) over it for at least 10 minutes and then apply antibiotic ointment. Second- and third-degree burns (blistering or white and without feeling) need to be treated by a doctor right away.



What if your fingers turn white from the cold?

Cold fingers and toes are best warmed with lukewarm water or dry heat. If you suspect frostbite, do not rub the skin.

How do you treat someone who's having a seizure?

Roll the person onto his or her side, and let the person move freely. Remove objects that could cause harm (e.g., glasses, furniture). Don't hold the person down, and do not attempt to put anything in his or her mouth.

How can you tell if someone is choking?

The universal sign for choking is clutching the throat with one or both hands – but that is not the only sign. Signs include wide eyes, suddenly leaving the room, gagging, coughing, being unable to talk, gesturing, wheezing, turning blue, and passing out. The person can appear agitated, panicked, or embarrassed. It's best to take a "watch and wait" approach if the person is forcefully coughing and not turning blue or if the person is able to verbally answer when you ask, "Are you choking?" Do not give anything to drink.

If you knew the answers, you've probably had first-aid training!

Basic first-aid training gives you the skills to appropriately respond to emergency situations such as choking, heat exhaustion, hypothermia, burns, bleeding, and broken bones. First aid is easy to learn and could possibly save someone's life. At the very least, first-aid training will give you confidence to treat minor injuries and recognize life-threatening situations so you can get emergency help fast!

After you've collected the supplies for your kit, read the first-aid instruction booklet to make sure you understand how to use the contents of your kit. Then, place the first-aid supplies for your home in a tool box or fishing tackle box so they will be easy to carry and protected from water. Store the kit where you can readily access it. Small backpacks or "fanny packs" make great mobile kits. Inspect your kits regularly to make sure flashlights and thermometers work. Replace any used or out-of-date medicines, and update medical and emergency contact information. (Medicines and batteries don't last as long when exposed to extreme temperatures. You might want to store those in your refrigerator.)

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What would you do if someone near you clutches his chest and collapses?

If you tap his shoulder, lightly shake him, say his name, and find that he's still unresponsive and not breathing, he might be having a heart attack. You'll learn more about recognizing these signs if you become trained in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In addition, CPR training teaches you the steps to take that improve that person's chance of survival.

For most medical conditions, early detection and a quick response are important for a positive outcome. Sign up and become certified in first aid or CPR. If it's been a while since you've been certified, you might want to brush up on your skills. Regardless of your level of skill or degree of training, if you find yourself in a life-threatening medical emergency, always call 911 immediately for emergency medical assistance.



Sign up for basic first aid or CPR classes.

1. **American Red Cross** – Several First Aid and CPR certification classes. Price varies. www.redcross.org
2. **CPR Today** – First Aid and CPR certification in 30-60 minutes. Cost \$25 for each course. www.cprtoday.com
3. **American Health Care Academy** – First Aid and CPR course. Cost \$20. <http://cparedcourse.com>
4. **FirstAidWeb** – First Aid and CPR classes. Cost \$25; Free if no certificate given. www.firstaidweb.com

An Internet search for "Free First Aid Course" or "Free CPR Course" will give you many options.

Helpful Tips for Less-Urgent First-Aid Situations

- **If you get stung by bee or wasp**, do not squeeze or pull out the stinger. Doing so may inject more venom into you. Instead, gently scrape the stinger out and then apply ice or a cold pack to soothe the skin. Antihistamines may relieve itching and burning. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can help with pain relief. If the stung person is having difficulty breathing, call 911.
- **To stop a nosebleed**, sit up, tilt your head forward slightly, and apply pressure to the fleshy part of your nose for 5-10 minutes. If your nosebleed lasts more than 15 minutes, call your doctor.
- **Blisters** should be bandaged, not popped.
- **Rinse a knocked-out tooth** in milk or clean water and place it back into the socket from which it came. Only touch the crown of the tooth – not the root. Then, contact your dentist for emergency assistance. If you are uncomfortable with re-implanting the tooth, store it in milk and take it with you to the dentist right away. It's best for the tooth to be re-implanted within an hour after being knocked out.
- Resist the urge to rub your eye when you get a **foreign object** (e.g., eyelash or dust) in it because you could scratch your cornea. Instead, rinse your eye with tap water or saline solution. (Take out a contact lens prior to trying to dislodge any foreign object from your eye.) If the object is deeply embedded, contact your doctor.
- The best way to **treat a wound** is to flush out the dirt with clean water. Do not dig into a wound to remove debris as this could push bacteria deeper into the wound. Apply antibiotic ointment, and bandage the wound to keep it moist and clean. Wounds will not heal more quickly if exposed to fresh air at night. Keep the bandage on.

MedicineNet, Inc. 2011.

Sources: Red Cross. 2011.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2011.; MedicineNet.com 2011.



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Instructions

1. Post the Health Challenge Calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. To complete the Challenge, you must have assembled at least one first-aid kit for home, work, or play. You must also complete a course either in first aid or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Keep up this practice for a lifetime of good health and wellbeing.
3. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
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_____ I assembled a first-aid kit for home, work, or play. _____ I completed first-aid training. _____ I completed a CPR course.

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

