First Aid Kits for the Traveler
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The Basics

- All international travelers should assemble and carry a travel health kit
- The kit should be tailored to the traveler's:
  - Need
  - Type of travel
  - Length of travel
  - Destinations

The Basics

- Kits should have enough supplies that the traveler will need for:
  - Managing any pre-existing medical conditions and treat any exacerbations of these conditions
  - Prevent illnesses and injuries related to travel
  - Take care of any minor health problems that may occur

The Basics

- The first aid kit should be easily accessible to the traveler
- If bringing the kit on the plane in your carry-on bag any liquids or gels cannot exceed the size limits (3oz or 90 mL)
- If traveling with prescription medication:
  - Keep in original pharmacy containers with clear labels (contents must be easily identified)
  - Avoid storing medications in daily reminder containers for flight
  - Bring a copy of prescriptions with generic names, dose, and directions
  - Controlled substances may require a note from the physician
  - Some items may not be permitted into the country

What to bring: Basic Items

- Band-Aids
- Disposable latex free gloves
- 4 X 4 gauze pads
- Cotton swabs
- Adhesive tape/elastic bandage roll
- Disinfectant to clean wounds
  - Povidone-iodine or 70% alcohol
  - Antifungal or antibacterial spray or cream
- 1% hydrocortisone cream
- Aloe gel for sunburns
- Neosporin for burns/wound prevention and treatment
- Digital thermometer
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Mosquito repellent
- In remote areas: suture kit
- First aid quick reference guide
Prescription Medications and Supplies

- Prescription medications taken on a regular basis at home
- Treatment of diarrhea with fever: ciprofloxacin or azithromycin
- Malaria prophylaxis medications if needed
- Medication to prevent or treat altitude sickness if needed
- Extra pair of prescription glasses or contacts
- Epinephrine auto-injectors

Over-the-Counter Medications (OTC)

- Any OTC medications taken at home on a regular basis
- Treatment of pain or fever:
  - Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, aspirin
- Treatment of gastrointestinal issues:
  - Upset stomach, watery-diarrhea without fever, constipation:
    - Loperamide or bismuth subsalicylate
    - Packets/tablets of rehydration salts for dehydration
  - Mild laxative
  - Antacids

Over-the-Counter Medications

- Treatment for upper respiratory tract discomfort:
  - Antihistamines (non-drowsy preferable during the day)
  - Decongestants, alone or in combination with antihistamines
  - Cough suppressants or expectorants
  - Cough drops
- Treatment for motion sickness:
  - Meclizine or dimenhydrinate
  - Mild sedative or sleep aid: diphenhydramine, melatonin
  - Saline nose drops
  - Saline eye drops

Supplies to Prevent Illness or Injury

- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based sanitizer (> 60% alcohol)
- Insect repellent for skin (containing about 30% DEET)
- Insecticide for clothing, mosquito nets, camping gear: Permethrin
- Bed net (if needed for protection against insects while sleeping)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or greater with UVA and UVB protection)
- Water purification tablets (for remote areas or camping with limited access to clean water)
- Latex condoms
- Personal safety equipment: Bike helmets
First Aid Kits for Managing Diabetes

- Your diabetic patients require additional items in their first aid kits:
  - Batteries for meters, pumps, and continuous glucose monitors
  - Blood glucose meter
  - Glucagon kit
  - Fast-acting glucose tablets or gels
  - Infusion sets for insulin pumps
  - Insulin syringes
  - Lancets
  - Skin prep wipes
  - Test strips

Documents

- May consider carrying the following documents:
  - Vaccine records (especially if proof of vaccination is required)
  - Copies of prescriptions for medications, eye glasses/contacts translated into local language
  - Documentation of pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or allergies translated into local language
  - Health insurance, supplemental travel health insurance, medical evacuation information
  - Emergency contact information of family members, health care provider, Country's Embassy or Consulate in the destination country

Conclusion

- Most items may be purchased in a local pharmacy
- Help your patients select the right first-aid kit for them—you can help them customize a kit for their needs
- Travelers should review the contents of pre-assembled kits; review to see if it contains everything they need
- While in the pharmacy they may purchase additional items if needed