
The Experimental Homesteader
Homemade
First Aid
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WILDERNESS
FIRST AID MAN
PEEL TO OPEN
Sterile
Gauze Pad

A necessity in every home, first aid kit doesn't have to be a store-bought and generic one- you can put together a homemade, natural first aid kit for your own family. Some people don't mind using over the counter pharmaceuticals, but if you're not too eager to use Big Pharma's product to treat yourself and your family, there's always a natural solution to most problems you might encounter.

Some people are wary of the effectiveness that natural remedies have, and decide on mainstream drugs for a variety of problems, but it's not always the best solution. Of course, mainstream medical treatment is without a doubt unavoidable in some cases, but for smaller injuries and problems, you won't have to sit around in a waiting room or fill yourself with drugs riddled with side-effects- you can easily treat yourself with natural remedies you have on hand.

For centuries, people have used herbal and natural remedies to treat minor health problems and "going herbal" can sometimes prove to be even more effective than using over the counter drugs. In case of minor problems like shallow wounds, cuts, sore throats, bug bites and so on, simple, natural solutions are the best option- Mother Nature's got it covered for you.

Natural Remedies for Your First Aid Kit

First aid kit isn't just for your home- you can custom make one for traveling, camping or for your car, and the best part is, you can use all-natural items for each and every one you make. There is a variety of different medicinal plants and recipes for natural remedies passed on from generation to generation, and it's up to you to create your own perfect combination for a first aid kit. and If you're not sure what should you include in your homemade natural first aid kit, here are our suggestions- choose and make combinations of these tried and true items that are perfectly tailored to your own needs!

Activated Charcoal: This coal-black dust is most often found in the form of capsules, and it's unsurpassed in home treatment of poisoning and ingestion of toxins, and disturbed stomach in general. It's even used in mainstream medicine, and it's most certainly a great addition to your homemade first aid kit. Activated charcoal is a completely natural antidote to most poisons, like arsenic, hemlock, strychnine and mercury, just to name a few, and it can also be applied topically on a snake or spider bite. However, if you suspect poisoning or you have been bitten by a poisonous animal, it's best to use activated carbon as a means of first aid only and seek the help

of a doctor immediately. In case of food poisoning, or vomiting and diarrhea, rely on activated charcoal to help the problems go away. And, as a bonus point, you can use it to whiten your teeth, too- it works wonders!

Aloe Vera gel: The gel found in Aloe Vera plants has a soothing and cooling effect on skin, and it's perfect for treating cuts, scratches, sunburns or rashes. The Aloe Vera gel not only calms the skin and eliminates irritation, it also has anti-inflammatory qualities and promotes healing. It can be used for blisters and smaller burns, too- rich in antioxidants and beneficial vitamins, it will help regenerate skin faster and more efficiently than mainstream topical gels. Aloe Vera gel can be either directly harvested from the plan (in case you have one) or bought in most stores and pharmacies- it's one of the most widely used natural remedies, and it's easily available.

Arnica gel or cream: Bright yellow flowers of mountain arnica are revered for its antiseptic, anti-inflammatory and pain relieving properties. Apply arnica gel or cream topically on painful joints, sore muscles or bruises- just be careful that the skin isn't broken. Arnica gel or cream will speed up the healing process and minimize the pain, as well as minimize the bruising. It's also great for insect bites since its circulation-stimulating properties minimize the swelling and help with the irritation.

Cayenne: This spice isn't handy only in the kitchen, it's also indispensable in a natural first aid kit. It is said that cayenne can stop a heart attack (although we can't verify that) if consumed when the first symptoms occur. Even though this powerful property is more than enough to move cayenne from cupboard to your first aid kit, it's actually not the main reason. The best quality of cayenne that it has tremendous effect bleeding- when applied topically, it can stop the blood pouring out of the wound in a matter of seconds. Contrary to the popular belief, pouring cayenne over an open wound doesn't sting at all, and it is by far the most efficient natural way of stopping the bleeding when injured.

Colloidal silver: Anti-bacterial and anti-viral, colloidal silver is an all-around great addition to your homemade natural first aid kit. Still used in mainstream medicine for treating burns, it's especially effective for treating sunburn or blisters, and its powerful properties will speed up your recovery. When dissolved in some salt water, it's a great remedy for pink eye, which is definitely one of the more common problems, especially if you have kids. A few drops of this solution

while make the pink eye disappear quickly and the salt part of the solution will eliminate the possibility of eye irritation.

Cramp bark: There's no need to use over the counter painkillers when that time of the month comes. This uterine sedative is perfect for treating those annoying cramps and regulating your cycle. Contrary to mainstream painkillers, cramp bark doesn't just treat the consequences, i.e. pain, it also treats the cause of the problem, relaxing the uterine muscles that were causing the pain in the first place.

Echinacea tincture: Widely used, this powerful plant is not to be toyed with- with great power comes great responsibility, so careful on how often you use it. Sure, it's great for boosting your immune system, but it doesn't in any way mean you should use it on a daily basis- there actually is such a thing as too much when it comes to herbal remedies. However, when you have a strep throat, a nasty cut or you feel you're coming down with a cold- it's time to whip out Echinacea tincture and enjoy its wondrous effects.

Eucalyptus essential oil: The refreshing smell of eucalyptus has great results with respiratory problems. In case your sinuses are clogged, or you have a runny nose that just won't go away, put a few drops of eucalyptus essential oil into a bowl with hot water and steam your face over it. The steam combined with the smell of eucalyptus will get rid of any blockage and help you breathe more easily after just a few minutes. If you prefer topical solutions more, a couple of drops of eucalyptus essential oil mixed in with Vaseline or coconut oil makes for a great salve for opening up your nasal passageways, or for respiratory problems such as coughing, when rubbed on the chest.

Ginger: The dried, ground ginger root (taken as a tea or in the form of capsules) takes away all your tummy troubles. It will sooth an upset stomach, help you fight off the morning sickness or a stomach bug, and treat nausea- which is especially great for traveling if you tend to get motion sickness or sea sickness. The stomach-soothing properties are just one of many health benefits of ginger, but maybe the most valued one when it comes to first aid- the fact it's most often consumed as a cup of warm, delicious tea is just another perk. If you're not a big fan of tea, look for ginger lozenges- they are equally effective.

Goldenseal: In its powdered form, goldenseal is great as a topical remedy for cuts and scratches- its antibacterial properties will prevent an infection and help out with the healing process. However, the true advantage of goldenseal is its anti-parasitic property- it will help you get rid of most intestinal parasites. Internal parasite infestation is a more common problem than people like to think, and having a powerful, natural anti-parasitic on hand can't hurt. In case you have stomach problems due to a bacterial or fungal infection, goldenseal can help you out with that, too.

Jewelweed: A must-have for all your camping trips, jewelweed (in the form of a salve, spray or fresh) is nature's cure for poison ivy. It completely neutralizes the substances in poison ivy that cause irritation, but it's not the only thing this amazing plant is good for- it will also neutralize other irritating plants, such as poison oak and stinging nettle, as well as help with a variety of skin rashes, from eczema to heat rash.

Lavender essential oil: When you have a headache, instead of reaching for the aspirin, gently massage your temples with a few drops of lavender oil- it will make the pain go away instantly. If you have sensitive skin, you can dilute a few drops of lavender oil in vegetable oil of your choice, just to avoid irritation essential oils often caused when applied directly to the skin. Lavender oil is also an amazing insect repellant, so mix some with water, pour into a spray bottle and apply when going camping or walking in nature.

Licorice tea: This delicious remedy is great to use for treating a sore throat, and its pleasant taste makes it great to use on kids, which in most cases resent medicine with bad taste. Licorice tea is also a great help with constipation since it regulates your digestive system and keeps it in check.

Tea tree oil: Revered for its antiviral and antifungal properties, tea tree oil is truly an overachiever- you can use it to treat anything from a sore throat to fungal infections. It's also great for treating painful gums and toothache, and as an insect repellant, too. Dilute a few drops of tea tree oil with water for gargling (in the case of a painful throat) or dilute it with vegetable oil for topical application, and watch miracles happen. Rub in this mixture behind your ear in case of an ear infection, both for relieving the pain and fighting off the infection.

Thyme essential oil: When diluted with water, this essential oil can be used to treat a sore throat or a toothache- just swish the mixture in your mouth or gargle it. The bonus benefit of thyme essential oil is that it extremely efficient when battling external parasites, such as crabs and lice.

Important Miscellaneous Items for a Homemade First Aid Kit

A well-stocked homemade first aid kit isn't only packed with herbal and natural remedies- you'll have to include some other goodies, too. Keep in mind the potential situations you'll be needing the first aid kit for, and add the items accordingly- for example, a hot water bottle probably won't find its place in your compact traveling first aid kit, but it's good to have in your home. Here's a list of essential items to include in your own first aid kit:

- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Bandages
- Gauze
- Cotton pads
- Thermometer
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Rubbing alcohol
- Hand sanitizer
- Hot water bottle
- Bulb syringe
- Superglue
- Cold pack

Without some of these items, treating injuries would be an impossible task. These items, combined with natural remedies mentioned above, are a winning combination for treating minor injuries and health problems at home, from scraped knee to belly ache.

Assembling Your First Aid Kit and Storing It

Ideally, you should make more than one first aid kit and customize their contents for their specific purpose. For example, create a smaller one for your car or workplace, customize a first aid kid to bring with you on your travels, and keep a fully stocked one at your home.

Of course, when it comes to storage, it's all a matter of personal choice- you can buy plastic containers, spacey pouches or keep the items securely tucked in a drawer. For your home first aid kit, you can even buy a small wall-mounted cabinet- this way, you'll have enough space for all of the essentials, and have your first aid kit easily accessible and neatly displayed. When choosing a place for your first aid kit, have in mind that most of the herbal remedies need to be kept in a dark and cool space to retain their medicinal properties and potency.

Regularly check the items in your first aid kit and replace the ones that have gone bad or are running low. The trick is to keep your natural first aid kit stocked with fresh, potent items that are always on hand.