

risk alert



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A first-aid kit can make all the difference

Many elements are essential to the operation of your religious organization; however, one crucial component is commonly forgotten—a first-aid kit. If well stocked and properly utilized, a first-aid kit can help you handle a variety of minor emergencies at your worship center in a moment's notice. A first-aid kit may be useful for things such as treating minor burns or scrapes, preventing infection in small wounds and providing temporary pain relief.



Creating an efficient first-aid kit

The type, size and contents of the proper first-aid kit for your organization are all dependent upon the nature and amount of your activities. First-aid kits can often be purchased at local retailers but can just as easily be put together by you or a member of your congregation. Either way, your first-aid kit should include the following:

- First-aid manual
- Sterilized gauze
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antiseptic solution (i.e., hydrogen peroxide)
- Acetaminophen (i.e., Tylenol) and ibuprofen (i.e., Advil)
- Diphenhydramine (i.e., Benadryl)
- Calamine lotion
- Two pairs of sterile gloves
- CPR administering mouthpiece
- Thermometer
- Eye wash solution
- Adhesive tape and bandages (various sizes)
- Elastic bandages
- Antibiotic cream
- Hydrocortisone cream (1%)
- Tweezers
- Sharp scissors
- Instant cold packs
- Alcohol wipes
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- List of local emergency telephone numbers
- Thermometer
- Safety pins
- Blanket (stored nearby)

The contents of your first-aid kit should be stored in a durable container that is easy to carry and open. If you plan to be near water in your activities, ensure that the first-aid kit is kept in

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a waterproof container. Your kit should be kept in a place that is out of the reach of young children but easily accessible to adults.

Along with keeping a first-aid kit at your main facility, you also should have additional kits elsewhere, such as your organization's vehicles, gymnasium, fellowship hall and other high-activity areas. Furthermore, first-aid kits should always be brought along for any type of travel—short or long—to be prepared for the unexpected.

Maximizing the effectiveness of your kit

After you have bought or created the proper first-aid kit for your organization, it is important to make others aware of its availability. Make sure the individuals of your congregation, especially those who will be helping with the activities at your organization, know where the kit is stored and how to use the first-aid supplies.

Additionally, a vital part of an effective first-aid kit is its maintenance. Keeping your kit in good working condition is very simple and requires a checkup only four times a year. The checkup should include the restocking of used items, replacement of expired ointments or creams and reminding congregation members of the kit's location.

For more information or to purchase a first-aid kit online, visit www.redcross.org/services and find "Anatomy of a First-Aid Kit" under "Health and Safety Services."

For a complete collection of the Risk Alert series, visit our Web site and look in the Safety Resources section.