



WEST PARRY SOUND HEALTH CENTRE FOUNDATION

As cottagers we patiently wait all year until we have that precious time on the water in the place that for many of us represents our happy place. For us, there are only 2 seasons – winter and dock! In preparation for our favourite season, we carefully stock the pantry, make sure we have bug spray and sunscreen, the latest board games and new toys for our water sports. BUT when was the last time we checked the **status of the first aid kit** dutifully stashed in the bathroom or boat house and ignored until we need it next?

A well-stocked first-aid kit can help you respond effectively to common injuries and emergencies. Store your kits someplace easy to get to and out of the reach of young children. Make sure children old enough to understand the purpose of the kits know where they're stored.

You can buy first-aid kits at many drugstores, online or assemble your own. You may want to tailor your kit based on your activities and needs. Your first-aid kit might include:

Basic supplies

- Adhesive tape
- Elastic wrap bandages
- Bandage strips and "butterfly" bandages in assorted sizes
- Super glue
- Rubber tourniquet or 16 French catheter
- Non-stick sterile bandages and roller gauze in assorted sizes
- Eye shield or pad
- Large triangular bandage (may be used as a sling)
- Aluminum finger splint
- Instant cold packs
- Cotton balls and cotton-tipped swabs
- Disposable nonlatex examination gloves, several pairs
- Duct tape
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Plastic bags, assorted sizes
- Safety pins in assorted sizes
- Scissors and tweezers
- Hand sanitizer
- Antibiotic ointment
- Antiseptic solution and towelettes
- Eyewash solution
- Thermometer
- Turkey baster or other bulb suction device for flushing wounds
- Sterile saline for irrigation, flushing
- Breathing barrier (surgical mask)

- Syringe, medicine cup or spoon
- First-aid manual
- Hydrogen peroxide to disinfect

Medications

- Aloe vera gel
- Calamine lotion
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Laxative
- Antacids
- Antihistamine, such as diphenhydramine
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Cough and cold medications
- Personal medications that don't need refrigeration
- Auto-injector of epinephrine, if prescribed by your doctor
- Pain relievers, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others)

Consider keeping aspirin in your first-aid kit, as well. Aspirin may be life-saving in an adult with chest pain. If you or someone else has new or unexplained chest pain or may be having a heart attack, call for emergency medical help immediately. Then chew a regular-strength aspirin. However, don't take aspirin if you are allergic to aspirin, have bleeding problems or take another blood-thinning medication, or if your doctor previously told you not to do so. Never give aspirin to children.

Emergency items

- Emergency phone numbers, including contact information for your family health care provider and pediatrician, local emergency services, and the poison help line.
- Medical consent forms for each family member
- Medical history forms for each family member
- Small, waterproof flashlight or headlamp and extra batteries
- Waterproof matches
- Small notepad and waterproof writing instrument
- Emergency space blanket
- Cell phone with solar charger
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent

Give your kit a checkup

Check your first-aid kits regularly to be sure the flashlight batteries work and to replace supplies that have expired or been used up.

Consider taking a St John's Ambulance first-aid course with CPR training and knowing where the closest public defibrillator is located. If your cottage location is isolated, you may want to consider purchasing your own defibrillator.

One of the great joys of our region is its diversity of wildlife, including the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. This also brings the risk of a venomous bite. The West Parry Sound Health Centre is the local antivenom depot and is always ready to provide the care needed to access and provide treatment for snakebites. You can learn more about avoiding snake bites and appropriate first aid when a bite occurs by visiting: <https://www.wpshec.com/index.php/ontario-antivenom-depot-117>

LOVE OUR HOSPITAL