

NEWS RELEASE

Assembling a First Aid Kit

Emergencies can happen at any time. Are you prepared with a well-stocked first aid kit at home? In any emergency, you and loved ones may be cut, burned or suffer other injuries. Remember, many injuries are non-life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention. A well-stocked first aid kit can help you tend to many situations.

"Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency if you have the right supplies. Consider buying or creating a first aid kit. Having the basic supplies helps you to be prepared for helping others when they are hurt, and in some serious instances, keep them safe before first responders arrive," said Asante Shipp-Hilts, Director of the Schoharie County Health Department.

While materials can vary in your kit, the basic ingredients of a home first aid kit include: sterile adhesive bandages, scissors, needles, tweezers, moistened towelettes, latex gloves, antiseptic, thermometer, and lubricant, cleansing agents or soap and sunscreen. Also, include antibiotic cream, chemical ice packs, scissors, gauze, non-prescription and prescription drugs, anti-diarrheal medication, antacid, syrup of Ipecac (used to induce vomiting for poisoning and given under the direction of a poison prevention specialist) and laxatives.

"A list of emergency phone numbers should be taped to the inside cover of your first aid kit. Keep a separate list of allergies and medications for each household member in a waterproof bag in your kit. In case your kit becomes wet, you will be able to read the lists. Include basic first aid instructions, too, which can be purchased or printed from the Internet," said Asante.

Store your first aid kit out of reach of children. Make sure to check expiration dates on the medications in your first aid kit. If the medicine has expired, properly dispose and replace it. Check instructions on the medicine container or packaging about safe disposal or ask your pharmacist. Not all medications or pills can be safely flushed or thrown away with the household garbage. First aid kit items are readily available at your local pharmacy store as well as most retail and grocery stores.

While you are at it, consider personalizing first aid kits for your car and work. Ideas for customization are available at <http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/emergency> and <http://www.ready.gov>.