

## **Child First Aid Essentials**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention claim that approximately nine million babies and children need crisis care for injuries every year — many as the result of burns and falls. A lot of these injuries can be treated with the use of a basic first aid kit in your home. First aid kits are intended to treat non-emergent circumstances which do not require a doctor to deliver therapeutic results. Having a child and baby first aid kit should be an essential in every household. These kits can be large or small — depending on the number of people in your family who might need access to it. The following is a list of essential steps to assist you in preparing your own child and baby first aid kit.

### **Step 1**

Find a sturdy box that can be used for storing your baby first aid kit. The container should also have a handle — making it easy to carry and transport with you when traveling. It should be easy to open for an older child to access on their own in case of an emergency situation where an adult may be injured or one is unavailable to help.

### **Step 2**

Be sure to clearly label the first aid kit and include a medical emblem or a red colored cross on the front so that you can quickly identify it in an emergency. If you also have a first aid kit for adults in your home, be sure to label each one differently and instruct your older children on which one is theirs.

### **Step 3**

Gather the emergency phone numbers of family, friends, hospitals, fire stations, and police in your community to have on hand in the case of a crisis situation. Also include the Poison Control Center's number (1-800-222-1222). Clearly print the list on the inside lid of the kit so that you are not rummaging for it when help is quickly needed.

### **Step 4**

Now, it is time to stock your baby first aid kit. The following items are must-haves for a family with small children and babies. Be sure to include syrup of ipecac (in case your baby swallows a poisonous substance), acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fevers and pain relief, thermometer, saline solution (for rinsing wounds), bandages of varying sizes, antiseptic wipes, antibiotic ointment, sunblock, and hydrocortisone cream. These are the basic essentials to get you started. Make sure to include any other item that you deem necessary or an essential that your baby needs — such as prescribed medications.

## **Step 5**

Print out a master list of everything you included in your kit and keep it inside the box. Every time you use an item, be sure to replace it as soon as possible and periodically check your list for all essentials that may be missing.

Now that you have your baby first aid kit stocked and ready, it is time to educate yourself in CPR training and emergency care. Most individuals will be faced with an emergency situation at some point in their lives — the most common including a bad fall and not being up to get up, burns from the stove, or bleeding wounds. If you know what to do when faced with one of these circumstances, it can mean the difference of life or death, which is why CPR training is so crucial. First aid and CPR training is available to everyone. In the United States, there are actually 700 divisions of the Red Cross that offer emergency teaching. Be sure to contact your local community center and hospital, as well, because a great deal of them offer free first aid and CPR training.