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First Aid Supplies and Kits

By James C. Jones, EMT

*The following article is from my upcoming book *The Prepper First Aid Hand Book*, scheduled for publication in early 2022 from Skyhorse Publishing. I also researched medical gear for my current book, *The Ultimate Book of Survival Gear*.*

Once a true regional or national emergency is in progress it will be too late to stock up on medical supplies. Anticipation of a disaster will result in panic buying of medications and sanitary supplies. General civil disorder and looting would certainly result in the loss or destruction of first aid supplies, and medications from pharmacies and clinics. Furthermore: hospitals and emergency medical services can be overwhelmed and unavailable in a mass-casualty, or epidemic event. Venturing out in search of such supplies under emergency conditions will involve significant risk. The prepared first aider should acquire as much first aid supplies, medical gear, and medications as possible well in advance. These provisions can become critical in

rendering care to family members, neighbors and friends. By being first aid prepared and educated, the first aider is performing an important service to the community. Throughout this book I have identified the specific items needed for various medical emergencies, so this chapter will be devoted to recommendations, and list for kits and packs.

Home First Aid Supplies

First and foremost, stock up on your prescription medications. Acquire any antibiotics and pain killers while you can. Although most medications expire in two-years, they are often effective for much longer. Especially if vacuum packed and kept cool. You must have a basic first aid book to assure proper procedures. The following is a partial list that could be expanded depending on your needs and skills.

1. 1, Pkg. Blood stoppers (Celox TM, QuikClot TM, and HemCon TM) powder or dressing

2. 1, 8oz. tube, Antibiotic ointment (e.g. Neosporin)
3. 1, 8 oz. tube, Hydrocortisone Cream
4. 1, 8 oz. tube Burn Ointment
5. 1, bar, Antibacterial Soap
6. 12, Alcohol swabs
7. 2-4 Instant Cold Packs
8. 1, bottle, non-prescription pain medication (e.g. Tylenol™)
9. 1, bottle, non-prescription antacid
10. 1, bottle, non-prescription antidiuretic
11. 1, bottle, non-prescription laxative
12. 1, bottle, non-prescription cold and allergy medications
13. 1, 3 oz. Eye drops
14. 1, 2-inch elastic bandage
15. 1, 3-inch elastic bandage
16. 2, triangle (cravat) bandage/sling
17. 24, Assorted small bandages (Band-Aids™)
18. 12, 2"x2" gauze pads
19. 12, 3"x3" gauze pads
20. 12, 4"x4" gauze pads
21. 1 12" x 30" Multi-Trauma Dressing
22. 12, Safety Pins (large)
23. 1-pair, EMT Shears
24. 1-pair, Splinter forceps and/or tweezers
25. 4, Single edge razor blades or scalpel blades with blade holder
26. 1, Toothache kit (available at drug stores)
27. 6-pair, Latex gloves your size.
28. 1-roll, 1" self-adhering tape
29. 1-roll, 2" self-adhering tape
30. 1-roll, ½" medical tape

Other recommended supplies would include EMT shears, ideal for cutting away clothing and other tough materials, cold pack for application to bruises and sprains, and a large Multi-Trauma Dressing to cover larger injuries. A blood pressure cuff and stethoscope can be used to assess a patient's circulatory and respiratory status. Padded aluminum Sam Splints™ are versatile and easy splints that save time. A set of oral airways can

be used to prevent the tongue from interfering with a clear airway. While the cervical spine can be stabilized with towels, newspaper and other items, a purpose-made cervical collar is the best method to prevent spinal injury after severe trauma.



This basic first aid kit from Survival Supply™ cost about \$30.00 and is adequate for dealing with most minor injuries. It may not be enough to treat more serious injuries and trauma during a disaster survival situation.

Backpack First Aid Kits

Outdoor activities usually involves the risk of some injury. The exact composition of an outdoor first aid kit depends on the potential injuries involve (e.g. hiking, vs rock climbing) and the availability of medical facilities (e.g. local woods vs deep wilderness). Basic, commercially available first aid kits are usually adequate for day trips or camping in State parks, but more advanced kits or trauma kits may be advisable for those engaging in high-risk activities, and those who venture well beyond the reach of rescue and emergency medical services. The items below would be considered the minimum provisions.

- 1 Assorted Bandages (Band-Aids™)
- 2 Blood stopper (various brands)
- 3 4, 3-inch gauze pads

- 4 Eyewash (1.2 oz.)
- 5 Single edge razor blade
- 6 Splinter tweezers
- 7 Small scissors
- 8 Neosporin or triple antibiotic cream
- 9 Hydrocortisone cream
- 10 Antacid tablets
- 11 Laxative tablets
- 12 Tylenol, Advil, etc.
- 13 2 pairs latex gloves
- 14 1-roll self-adhesive tape
- 15 1 Tourniquet device (e.g. CAT Tourniquet, Israeli Wound Dressing)

Survival Advanced Medical Care Equipment

Beyond basic first aid kits, there are specialized items that can be used by trained individuals to deal with a variety of serious medical emergencies. Advanced medical and surgical supplies were generally unavailable to non-professionals until the development of the internet. Today these items are available to all, and instructions and classes are available online and in various traditional classes specifically for the laymen. Typical advanced medical items include, chest seals for closing sucking chest wounds, needle decompression kits for relieving tension pneumothorax and hemothorax, IV setup kits, airway adjuncts, and suturing kits. The Hyfin™, vented, chest seal, twin packs sell for about fifteen-dollars. TRAK™ needle decompression kits sell for less than ten-dollars. Nitro-Pak sells basic suturing kits for thirty-two dollars and full emergency surgical kits for forty-six-dollars. They also have larger trauma packs, skin staplers and airway adjuncts.



Top row, left to right: popular CAT™ tourniquet device, SWAT-T™ tourniquet, Celox-A™ hemostatic injector, Quik-Clot™ and Celox hemostatic dressings, ARS™ chest decompression need kit, HALO™ chest puncture seal. Bottom row, left to right: sterile wound dressing, Israeli combat wound dressing, US military combat wound dressing, small hemostatic dressings, ARS™ chest decompression need kit, Rusch™, and HH DualSeal™ chest puncture seals.



Additional items to build up a medical kit include a cervical collar (top), Blood Pressure cuff and stethoscope (center,) nasal and oral airways (lower right), a Sam Splint™, and large multi-trauma dressings. The EMT shears (bottom center) are excellent for cutting clothing, seatbelts and bandaging.

Antibiotics

Antibiotics for humans are available only by prescription, but antibiotics for animals can be purchased at farm-supply stores right off the shelf. Fish antibiotics such as Cephalexin, Doxycycline and Amoxicillin are sold at pet supply stores and through survival supply outlets. BUDK sells a bottle of one-hundred, two-hundred and fifty milligram Cephalexin tablets for about forty-dollars, the same size Amoxicillin goes for twenty-five dollars, and Doxycycline at just under sixty-dollars.



Antibiotics, blood stopper, hydration mix and other medication can be obtained from veterinary supply, and survival supply outlets. While it is general unwise to retain unused prescription medications, pain medications may be in short supply during a large-scale disaster. Most medications are effective long past their "official" expiration dates.

Surplus Medical Supplies

Flea markets and gun shows and military surplus outlets often have a variety of high quality medical supplies and instruments on sale. Out of date or obsolete bandaging and dressings are still usable if they remain sealed. Whole combat Trauma kits, and surgical kits are

often available. Occasional hard to find items such as stretchers, and water purifiers can be found. Medical instruments such as clamps, long tweezers, scalpels, scissors, bullet probes, and all sizes of hemostats can be had for a few dollars each. Many medical facilities throw out these expensive tools rather than sterilize them, so they wind up at flea markets or gun shows.



A collection of Stainless-steel medical instruments purchased at gun shows and flea markets for about one dollar each.

Prepackaged First Aid Kits

If your main concern is just household injuries then a good basic first aid kit can be purchased online or at local pharmacies at from 20 to 40 dollars, but you may need to supplement it with larger bandages, some 2 inch elastic bandages, hemostatic dressings, and various medications for pain, and digestive issues.

Trauma Kits

Trauma kits are intended to provide all of the necessary medical equipment to treat and stabilize victims of major injuries, such as arterial bleeding, amputations, sucking chest wounds, large-area burns, and gunshot wounds. Very small kits are designed to be carried by police officers and military personnel and are equipped to quickly stop severe bleeding, and provide basic wound management

pending the arrival at the Emergency Room or Aid Station. Larger trauma kits are intended to be carried and used by trained EMT or Combat Medics, and include more extensive supplies such as cervical collars, wound closure devices, large wound dressings, tape, airways, BP cuffs, stethoscopes, cold packs, Sam Splints™, and instruments, and basic personal protective equipment. These larger kits can cost from 130 dollars to over 400 dollars depending on how many victims they are intended to manage.



The small Patrol Officers trauma kit on the left from Rescue Essentials™ fits into the pockets of tactical pants and contains a SWAT-T tourniquet gauze and tape. The larger military trauma kit contains a Combat Application Tourniquet (CAT), a wound dressing and other supplies. The large “Elite Trauma First Aid Backpack from Live Action Safety™ in the center sells for \$170.00 and includes a full cervical collar, tourniquet, major trauma

dressings, bandaging, airways, thermal blankets, cold-packs, and other advanced supplies. Kits are also available from NitroPack™ and Rescue Essentials™

Should I Invest in an AED

Automatic Electronic Defibrillation (AED) devices cost thousands of dollars and were only available to professional medics when they first came on the market. These devices have been greatly simplified in recent years so that anyone (I mean anyone) can use them. Lower prices have made them available to install at gyms, schools, and public buildings, but still a bit costly for most home budgets. Low cost AED's costing less than six hundred dollars have come onto the market very recently and costs may continue to decline. If your household has elderly residents, or those with a high risk for heart attack, investment in an AED may be justified. There is no question that immediate access to and use of an AED by family members can save a life much better than CPR alone.

Conclusion

The recent pandemic almost collapsed the emergency medical system. Recent cyberattacks, and supply shortages emphasizes the necessity of personal and family medical preparedness. This means training and equipment. While family preparedness is an absolute necessity, group and network medical preparedness is the only way to assure adequate medical care when the EMS system, and the local hospitals are no longer functional.



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CAMP INDEPENDENCE REVIVAL

Camp Independence is the nation's oldest and original preparedness gathering. The event started in 1968 with a small group from Chicago renting a single cabin at Tippecanoe River State Park in Indiana, and conducting outdoor survival training. The event grew over the years until Live Free USA rented the entire Group Camp facility including 32 cabins, a dining hall, and a variety of training buildings. The programs expanded to include more emergency preparedness, defense, self-reliance, and disaster survival programs. Full scale disaster drills, and scenario based training involving scores of families and groups were a frequent part of the program. The event and Live Free USA garnered national attention in the 1980's with media vans and even helicopters landing at the park. The end of the Cold War brought a false sense of security and a decline in support for survival and preparedness education. Live Free struggled to continue operations and participation in Camp Independence drew smaller crowds.

Recovery was underway when the Indiana DNR elected to close the Group Camp facilities five years ago. We tried some other venues, but eventually elected to use the remaining Tepicon Hall at the same park for events, while we seek to raise funds for our own facilities. Of course Camp Independence was canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic. Some felt we should postpone the 2021 event, but we felt it was important to reestablish our commitment to survival and preparedness in the wake of the very kind of disaster we have been predicting and preparing families for, for over fifty years.



Camp Independence 2021 was the 50th time we have conducted this program. The weather was perfect and while there was a somewhat smaller turnout than usual, we were gratified to meet many of our loyal supporters from decades past, as well as plenty of new members. The event began with a prayer and a moment of silence to remember three of our officers who have passed away in since the last event. Jim Jones, the organizations founder, pointed out that most of the founding members and many of the "core group" members from the 80's are in poor health and certainly will not be able to organize these events much longer. If there is to be a Camp Independence 2022, 23 etc. and other events, they must be initiated, organized and promoted by younger members. In view of recent events, and

ongoing threats to life and freedom, it would be tragic if Camp Independence and Live Free USA were to wither away when they are needed most.



Participants enjoy a class in Tepicon Hall.

This year's classes included "Ten Principles of Survival", "Personal Security and Self-Defense", "Black Powder Weapons" and "Knife Sharpening". We had two instructors who canceled. We certainly would have liked to have had more outdoor activities, but due to continued concerns about the pandemic and the short time for promotion this was not possible. Thanks to the volunteers who provided food from the kitchen, and help cleanup. Also thanks to all who contributed prizes for the Survival Stuff raffle. We did accomplish a lot and learn a lot that we can build on for years to come. Camp Independence revived Live Free and set the stage for a new Live Free USA as we move forward.



Tom Koll demonstrates a self-defense technique at Camp Independence 2021



Survive, Evade, Resist, Escape

Standard US Marine training at Camp Lejeune, includes a course in "SERE", survival, evasion, resistance and escape in hostile territory. In some ways the elements of the course mirror my "Ten Principles of Survival" for civilians. Considering the ongoing political conflicts right here in America, and the increasing instability of our society, we may all find ourselves in "hostile territory" at some point in the future. The survival element of the training consists of learning how to cover the basics of shelter, food, water, warmth and first aid on your own in the outdoors. Evasion, of course teaches the recruit how to avoid being caught by the

enemy. In addition to camouflage and covering your tracks, you have to know how to evade dogs, and drones. These first to subjects are straight out of Army Manual FM 21-76 Survival Evasion and Escape. Resistance training consists of realistic scenarios where the recruit is subjected to various kinds of stressful interrogation techniques. Escape training includes various methods of escaping from handcuffs, zip ties, rope, and tape. Imagine yourself on the run, without any equipment, unable to contact anyone, unable to buy anything, and constantly hunted by those who intend to harm, imprison or kill you. You must keep moving, forage and steal for what you need, not be seen and/or blend in to your environment. Perhaps this would be an appropriate addition to modern survival training for civilians. Below are the eight elements of Marine SERE training.

S-size up the situation, surroundings, physical condition, and available gear.

U-use all your senses to watch for danger

R-remember who you are and where you are at all times.

V-vanquish your fears and sense of panic.

I-improvise and be prepared to adapt to the unexpected.

V-value living and the value of your life to others and a mission

A-act like those around you to blend in and avoid attracting hostility

L-live by your wits and be prepared to use all of your skills and experience to survive.

I reworded the text slightly for civilian application. Those familiar with the Ten Principles of Survival will recognize the similarities. In situations where oppression, foreign or domestic divides us into resisters or collaborators, the elements SERE may be important survival skill. Let's hope it never comes to that, but as they say "better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it.

Survival Shotguns

We hear a lot about the handguns and the rifles that are recommended for home defense and survival, but the shotgun is often overlooked. However, the shotgun may be the best and most versatile survival weapon of all. Okay, it's not easy to conceal and it's hard to employ in tight spaces, so it's not ideal to foil street crime or carjacking. However, for home defense and urban and suburban civil disorder situations the shotgun has great advantages over handguns and carbines. Just the sight of that big barrel and the sound of a round being jacked into the chamber can be enough to discourage most thugs. One shot puts multiple projectiles downrange in a pattern that has a much better chance at a first shot hit than any other firearm. A direct hit at close range will positively stop the criminal D-E-A-D in his tracks. A few round sending dozens of projectiles downrange will stop a whole gang. Lower velocity "law enforcement" round are ideal for close quarters and indoors encounters since they have reduced recoil and less

likelihood of injuring innocent people further away. In the street you are getting off about six round to the handguns one or two. Shotguns have amazing versatility. You can perforate a vehicle with buckshot or stop it with a slug or armor-piercing round. You can use breaching rounds to open doors or use exploding or incendiary rounds to discourage attackers or clear your escape route. Of course once you are safe you can still bring down game for food with shot and slugs. Compared to good handguns and combat rifles, shotguns are relatively cheap. You can get a good, new, combat style pump, shotgun for around \$300.00 to \$400.00 dollars. Shotguns are often less regulated than handguns and rifles and attract less attention. I do recommend that you replace the stock with a folding or collapsible stock for close situations. You may also want to ad a shell holder for quick reloads or to keep special round handy. Other customizing options include a magazine extension, barrel shroud, and flashlight and lazar pointer. Accessories are available for most Mossberg, Winchester, and Remington shotguns from most sporting goods stores. More recently: specialized combat shotguns have begun to appear on the markets. Short pump shotguns such as the KEL-TEC KSG that has two six-round fixed magazines allowing the user to switch ammunition types without reloading is a good choice at a priced at around \$800.00. More exotic, magazine fed pump and semi-auto shotguns provide more rapid fire and the opportunity to switch ammunition in combat. These come in full length and short, Bull-Pup configurations costing from \$900.00 to \$1,400.00. Regardless of your budget or choice, a shotgun remains the most versatile,

fearsome, and effective home defense weapon.



A wide variety of ammunition is available for all occasions. Shown here are: law enforcement rounds (short), double-ought buckshot, slugs, armor -piercing, flamethrower, fireball, breaching, and non-lethal rubber rounds.



Mossberg 500, 12-gauge “camper” model came with a pistol grip (no stock) this was easily replaced with an Advanced Technology folding stock and a 5-round shell holder



Ithaca “riot gun” designed for police use outdoors. It’s little less maneuverable indoors and not as convertible. Though you could saw off the stock and refinish the pistol grip.



The Dery Arms (Turkey) MKA-1923 gas operated semi-automatic shotgun is only 20 inches long, and operates with a 5, 10 or 15 round magazine. The “bull-pup” design makes it ideal firepower in close combat. It weighs about 8 ½ pounds and cost from \$800 to \$900 dollars.

Passive and Active Means of Reconnoitering

By the 48th Ronin**

When the SHTF, preppers will be in **dozens** of different locations: cities, suburbs, mountains, rural areas, etc. Yet they will all have common needs: food, water, shelter, self-defense, etc. One synonym for ‘reconnoiter’ is to “keep an eye out”, and this is what all preppers have in common no matter where their bug-out location (BOL). To ‘hunker in the bunker’ without knowledge of the outside is a recipe for disaster.

For purposes of discussion, let us pose two distinct threats: 1) unprepared people fleeing whatever disaster has befallen them, and 2) armed groups of mainly men whose means of survival is to ‘pillage and plunder’. If you study past wars and disasters (whether real or fictional), I think these two groups will predominate.

The prepared prepper must know their location and beyond **better than anyone else** and have detailed paper maps. These maps are now available from government resources, so get them while you can. The prepper must also know every stream, tunnel, sewer, alley, road, trail, hill, rail, and so forth. The radius of the circle will depend upon your unique circumstances. But beyond this, it also helps to keep tabs on the larger picture: this may be your state, the U.S., or the world at large, depending upon the situation.

Passive Monitoring: This involves the use of communication gear and doesn’t have to cost a great deal of money. You may have elders, older children, and disabled in your group: **passive monitoring is ideal for them to do!** Here are the basics:

1. A battery-operated AM/FM radio. Some of these also have a TV band.
2. A battery-operated HAM receiver.
3. A 40-channel SSB CB base station.
4. A NOAA hazard alert radio.
5. A scanner, but one's budget may not be able to afford this item.

Faraday Cages and external antennas for all of these are a must! Passive monitoring may include two-way communication with like-minded folks; for example: if there are other farm houses or like-minded groups at varying distances, it will be important to stay in touch with them.

In the last few years, another tool has become quite affordable: electric drones with 1080HD camera. Starting prices are under \$100.

Active Monitoring: This involves direct observation and patrolling. Tools you might need:

1. High-power binoculars.
2. Spotting scopes.
3. Camouflage clothing and covering to defeat infra-red.
4. Short-range comm gear.
5. Food and water.
6. Maps.

The scout is looking for possible threats; thus, keeping the members at the BOL safe. When we think of the word 'scout', readers of a certain age may think of the Indian Scout, or the specialized scout in the Vietnam War making his way through the jungle. But again, a child can be a scout: If your BOL is in a dense city, perhaps sending a 12 y/o child to the government run food pantry might be a good way to gather Intel.

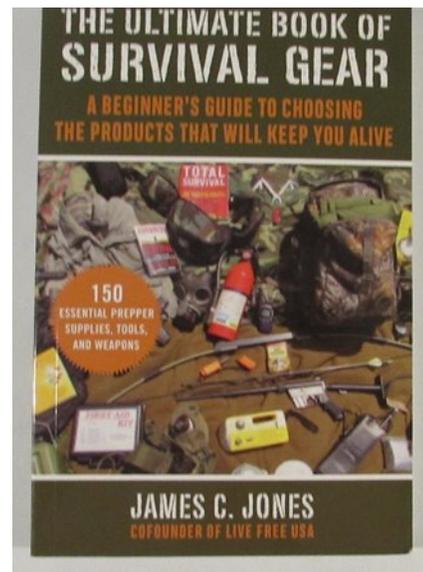
***Please read the story of the 47 Ronin: Wikipedia has a summary, but Amazon has some excellent paperback books on this true story.*



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Live Free USA as lost two of our most active Directors within the last year due to illnesses. We were already short of enough leaders to fill all of the positions on the Board of Directors before these losses. While the Annual Meeting had to be postponed, we will have to fill these positions and restart our programs early next year. We need electing or reelecting the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and all seven Directors in early 2022. **WE DO NOT WANT PLACEHOLDER OFFICERS! Those who take an office should commit to aggressive leadership and self-activated activity. Any officer should be doing at least eight to ten hours of work for Live Free USA each month. Elected officers are required to take-on**

at least one of the tasks specified in the bylaws, including: fund raising, public relations, security, training, publications, and chapter coordination. Officers can designate Deputy Directors to assist in operations. Do not run for an office if you are not prepared to work. We have the established reputation, we have the funds and equipment, we have the developed programs, but we have far too few WORKING leaders taking the initiative or adopting programs as their own. The recent pandemic will reenergize the whole preparedness industry and establish the importance of our mission beyond question, but it we are not prepared to lead, we will fail our members and our country. **WE ARE LOOKING FOR DEDICATED LEADERS!** While we would hope that some of our readers and members will step up, we may have to reach outside the organization.

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