First Aid Kit Contents

The easiest way to set up your first aid kit is to start with a premade one – you'll find many on the market – and then add to it as necessary. A first kit will seldom have (or need) all of the following, but consider the appropriateness of each in your kit:

- Latex or vinyl gloves, pocket mask with one way valve for rescue breathing, ventilation barriers, eyeglasses/eye protection, face mask – as you learned in your EFR course (or other first aid training), you use these to reduce the risk of infectious diseases, and to reduce contact with blood, body fluids, mucus membranes, wounds or burns.
- The Emergency First Response Participant Manual for ready access to first aid information for common injuries or conditions.
- The PADI Accident Management Workslate to provide dive accident specific management flow instructions and emergency contact information (more about contact information later).
- A pad of paper or blank slate for recording what you observe and the steps you take to help an injured person to provide to emergency medical personnel.
- Include reference materials with first aid specific to aquatic life injuries.
- Coins or phone card – so you can make a telephone call at a pay phone.
- Cell phone with power adapter – so you're not limited by the phone's battery.
- Large absorbent dressings (various sizes) – used to help stop bleeding.
- Sterile gauze pads (various sizes) – used to help stop bleeding and dress wounds.
- Clinging rolled bandages (various sizes) – used to dress wounds.
- Adhesive bandages (various sizes) – used to dress wounds.
- Adhesive tape – used to dress wounds.
- Nonadherent, dry pads – used to dress burn wounds.
- Triangular bandages – used to immobilize dislocations and fractures.
- Sterile cotton – used to dress wounds.
- Cotton tipped swabs – used to clean wounds.
- Bandage scissors – used to cut bandages and dive apparel.
- Tongue depressors – to check vital signs during illness assessment and can be used as splinting material for finger dislocations and fractures.
- Tweezers – to assist in removing material.
- Needle – to assist in removing foreign material.
- Safety pins – to attach and secure bandages.
- Penlight – for light and to use as an examination tool.
- Oral thermometer – to measure temperature as a vital sign.
- Squeeze bottle of water – for hydration and divers with heat stroke, for burns, eye or wound wash.
- Splints – to immobilize dislocations and fractures.
- Emergency blanket – for warmth and to cover divers with shock.
- Cold packs – for bruises, muscle injuries, strains, eye injuries, stings and dislocation and fractures.
- Hot packs – for venomous bites and stings.
- Vinegar – to neutralize stinging cells of jellyfish.
- Plastic bags – used to dispose of gloves and medical waste and may also be used in lieu of actual gloves as a barrier.
- Small paper cups – for drinking and to cover eye injuries.
- Denatured alcohol – for disinfectant (not to be used on wounds).
- Antibacterial soap – to clean wounds.
- Antiseptic solution or wipes – for wounds.
- Antibiotic ointment – for wounds.
- Hydrocortisone ointment – for stings/irritations.
- Aspirin and nonaspirin pain relievers – to reduce swelling and diver discomfort.
- Antihistamine tablets – for allergic reactions.
- Sugar packs, candy or fruit juice – for low blood sugar.
- Activated charcoal – for poisoning.
- Anti nausea drugs – for reducing seasickness.
- Nasal decongestant spray – with physician’s approval, useful for divers with equalization difficulty.
- Sunscreens – to prevent sunburn.