

Title:

Is Your Military Medical Kit Adequately Stocked? Don't Leave Base Without These Vital Supplies

Word Count:

683

Summary:

Men and women serving in the military forces may be deployed overseas to a variety of training or reserve areas, or they may even be sent for active duty to a battle zone. The commanding officers will issue orders to provide these service personnel with all needed gear and supplies. A military medical kit is part of the official equipment that most soldiers receive, but individual soldiers may need to request specialized items or check to be sure that they have all the necess...

Keywords:

medical kits,military medical kits,medical kit,travel kits,military,tactical gear,military gear

Article Body:

Men and women serving in the military forces may be deployed overseas to a variety of training or reserve areas, or they may even be sent for active duty to a battle zone. The commanding officers will issue orders to provide these service personnel with all needed gear and supplies. A military medical kit is part of the official equipment that most soldiers receive, but individual soldiers may need to request specialized items or check to be sure that they have all the necessary things that may possibly be needed during a tour of duty.

Most kits are designed to carry basic supplies that will meet the usual known or anticipated medical needs, like blisters, cuts, sunburns, or muscle soreness. Other supplies help to prepare temporary emergency care for extreme wounds, critical exposures to toxins or environmental hazards, and side effects of ecosystem and climate adjustments. Since no portable kit could hold all the possible equipment and supplies that might be needed, it is up to the medical officer to design a generic list for most of the company's needs based on prevailing conditions. Thus, space and weight are limited in a medical pack due to competing equipment needs that the soldier must carry, so it is important to review the kit periodically and discard expired items while adding new ones that are needed for changing health or duty needs.

Wound care is a primary consideration. Assorted bandages should include large

and area-size adhesive strips, a gauze bandage approximately 2" x 5 yards (or of similar proportions), square gauze pads, and adhesive tape, along with butterfly wound closure strips. Foot relief or blister pads, as well as eye wash and eye pads, should be included. A small tube of antibiotic ointment, another of burn cream, hydrogen peroxide, alcohol prep pads, and moist towelettes are useful for many situations, as well. Soap can be brought if room allows.

In case of bleeding injuries or superficial surgery needs, other types of tools and supplies can be added to the medical pack. Sterilized tweezers and scissors, EMT shears, a blood stopper kit, ammonia inhalants, disposable gloves, a syringe with needle, latex tubing, stethoscope, flashlight, an oral thermometer, and cotton swabs make useful additions. Don't forget a small medical manual that pertains specifically to the type of conditions the soldier is likely to encounter. One that is enclosed in plastic to protect it from the elements is especially useful.

Pain management supplies are a routine component of any soldier's medical pack. Pain relievers like Tylenol or Ibuprofen are important to include, along with an antihistamine product. Those who may have special medication needs should arrange to bring along any prescription products they may likewise need.

If there is a reasonable chance of bodily injury, an arm splint and cast plaster may be dispensed, along with a sling or binder, if space permits. In some units, the medic is responsible for managing these and other supplies that may be more randomly needed, so the soldier will not have to take these items along.

Depending on other equipment needs and packaging, a medical kit might contain water purification supplies, an emetic, a blood pressure cuff, and earplugs. A gas mask could be part of the medical kit or fit with field supplies, based on its design and how the other things are packed, allowing for space and accessibility in the event the mask is needed. Kits can be rearranged occasionally to help soldiers keep handy the items they are most likely to need for a particular assignment. If a soldier is unsure about whether to take along certain supplies, he or she should check with the medical officer.

Each medical supply bag will be standardized to that base of operations, and then perhaps tailored somewhat to individual soldiers' needs. In some cases, weight or space may prohibit the inclusion of everything mentioned above, so adjustments will need to be made. The ultimate goal is to provide triage and emergency care to protect the soldier until he or she can return to base for more thorough evaluation and treatment.