

First Aid and Emergency Supplies

If you ride horses, you know all kinds of accidents can happen, from bruises and cuts to serious injuries to you or your horse. **BE PREPARED!** I've compiled a list of the things I have on hand to share with you. If you don't have any first aid or medical experience, I strongly urge you to take a class. You can start by calling for Red Cross for ideas.

I always carry my first aid pack on the trail and have extra supplies in my trailer. Let your fellow riders know if you have any medical conditions, they should be aware of in case of an accident, such as blood thinners, high blood pressure or diabetes. You can even make up business cards with your emergency medical and contact information to pass out. It can save your life. Also let fellow riders know where your keys are in case you get hurt.

First Aid Trail Pack

- Assorted Band-Aids (include some big ones)
- Water
- Pre-soaped, dry, face cloths (just get it wet and great for cleaning any scrapes or cuts)
Initial cleaning any wound with soap and water is better than antibiotic ointment or any other cleaner.
- Gauze (roll or squares)
- Non-stick pads
- Vet wrap (coban)
- Polo-wrap. (great for wrapping a horse leg or securing bandages or splints)
- Feminine sanitary pad (already sterile and individually wrapped) great for larger wounds and pressure dressings [tampon for plugging puncture wounds-can also use as tinder to get a fire started quickly]
- Steri-strips or butterfly type bandage for small cuts that may need stitches later)
- Spray bandage
- ActiSplint (rolled foam padded aluminum splint that you can bend to you needs) Comes with directions.
- Clean bandanas (I have a large one and several small ones for slings or tying dressings or splints in place.)
- Benadryl (for allergic reactions)
- Antacids
- Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- Large washable vet pad (for horses or to pad a splint)
- Scissors

- Tape (cloth or athletic)
- Solar blanket
- Tweezers for splinters
- I use multiple zip-lock baggies to keep my supplies sorted and clean.
- Remember to pull out your kit and check it at least a couple of times a year and replace anything you use.

IF NOTHING ELSE, TAKE PLENTY OF WATER! While it is needed to clean injuries, it is even much more important to stay hydrated. Dehydration can ruin a ride and be seriously dangerous. Summers in Idaho are hot and dry, so you can become dehydrated very quickly! If there is an accident, a short ride can easily turn into a long one. Even if your horse just pulls up lame, you may need to walk home!

Other supplies you may want to consider if you are riding in the back country:

- A large plastic bag (to protect from rain, or ground moisture. You can also line your hat or helmet to carry water for you or your horse from nearby.)
- A whistle. Searchers can hear it better than shouting.
- A “Spot” or other emergency transponder designed for back county use. Most require an annual fee and come with a variety of functions.
- Fire starting supplies. To keep warm and smoke is visible from a long distance.
- A metal cup for drinking or heating water. If you are stranded and it’s cold you can always drink hot water or tea to keep warm.
- Food: energy bars, jerky, tea, bullion.
- Water filtration system to make local water potable.
- Something brightly colored so it is visible from a distance or the air.
- Flashlight or headlight(check batteries a couple times a year)
- External battery pack to charge your phone if necessary. Even though there is often no cell service, I use a GPS map tracking app on my phone so I don’t get lost.
- Extra halter, rope and emergency tack mending supplies: small zip ties, leather laces, or shoe laces, multi-tool, Chicago screws, hoof pick.
- Small foldable hand saw.
- Tourniquet for an injury where pressure dressing won’t stop the bleeding.
- Aspirin [non-coated]

**Once you set up an emergency pack, you just have to attach it to your saddle and only go through it once a year to check and/or update it. I rig mine with metal clips to quickly attach and remove my packs as I found it difficult to leave them on while tacking and un-tacking.