Basic Medical Kit for High School Sports: A Guide

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This article is intended for the high school coach who is looking for some guidelines on assembling a basic medical kit. This is intended to be a guide and not a requirement. Individual needs will vary from one sport or school. Also included are tips for the successful coach to follow in managing injuries to your players.

As an athletic trainer a medical kit is my mobile medical office. I have certain items that I use on a daily basis and some items that I hope I will never have to use. Every item in a medical kit should have a purpose and provide a service needed for caring for common injuries of that sport. Having a facemask removal tool in a med kit for tennis just does not make sense. A clean, well-organized kit will make finding the right item(s) much timelier. This also helps in tracking inventory and re-stocking of your most used items.

I have outlined some basic and specialty items for a high school medical kit.

Basic Items

- Tape
- Pre-Wrap
- Scissors / Tape Cutter
- Band-Aids
- Ace Wraps
- Exam Gloves
- Gauze Pads / Sponges
- Antibiotic Ointment
- Emergency Medical Forms

- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Alcohol Wipes
- Hand Sanitizer
- Tuff-Skin / Tape Adherent
- Flexi-Wrap / Shrink Wrap
- Ice Bags
- Chemical Ice Packs
- Cotton Balls / Nose Plugs
- CPR Mask with one-way Valve
Specialty Items

AED (Automated External Defibrillator)        Leg Immobilizer
Athletes Meds / Inhalers                       Mouth Guards
Blister Pads / Mole-Skin                       Padding for Casts and Braces
Contact Lens Solution and Case                 Pen Light
Crutches                                       Sam Splints
Epi-Pen (for anaphylactic shock)               Shoulder Immobilizer
Extra Uniform                                  Tampons
Facemask Removal Tool                          Thermometer
Glucose Tablets                                Tweezers
Heel and Lace Pads                             Vacuum Splints

Universal Precautions

Here are some tips to make it easier for coaches to use Universal Precautions.

• Have basic medical supplies readily available. Carry a pair of gloves and some gauze pads in your pocket.

• Make it a Habit and stick to it every time you deal with bodily fluids.

• Remember – any blood containing fluid is considered to be “infected” and you should use Universal Precautions to help protect you, your family and your athletes! Many blood borne pathogens are alive and well here in Iowa.

Emergency Management Plan

Below are some pearls of wisdom that I have gathered from years of observing successful high school coaches managing and implementing a comprehensive athletic injury program.

• Have a “Game Plan” for an injury. This plan should be comprehensive in nature. Have a plan in place for dealing with injuries wherever they might occur. (Practice, home games, away games, etc.)

• Practice your First Aid procedures. You make your athletes practice plays to reduce mistakes. The same principles apply to injury management. Practice makes perfect and eliminates mistakes, confusion and poor decisions.
• Know how to use your **safety equipment**.

• Designate one person (preferably an Athletic Trainer or Coach with a medical background) to be “**In Charge**” of your injuries. This will help with continuity of care and decrease confusion on the “playing status” of an athlete.

I hope you have found this information to be useful and practical. Dealing with injuries is always going to be an aspect of your coaching duties. Good coaches learn to “**Plan**” for the worst and can “**Manage**” when the star athlete gets hurt. Your preparation and actions could help **save a life**.