

Household Items With First Aid Uses You Didn't Know About



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Non-edible Household Item to Use in a Medical Emergency

As preppers, we all love a good multi-purpose item and when it comes to medical supplies, there are many items that you have just laying around the house that are superstar substitutions for the “real thing”. As a matter of fact, some of these should have a permanent place in your med kit.

Bleach

Household bleach at a 10:1 water to bleach solution kills just about every nasty bug including hepatitis, HIV and Staphylococcus. Use it to sterilize equipment, kill foul odors such as rotting flesh or infection, and to sterilize an area if you need to operate. Clean the area with it after the emergency is over to kill any infectious disease or bug left behind by the patient.

Feminine Hygiene Products

Oddly enough, pads weren't originally invented for feminine hygiene; that use was created by nurses after World War I when there was a surplus of them. Originally, they were created as bandages for use on the battlefield. They're absorbent, sterile and portable. They even come in different sizes!

While we're on the subject, tampons are good to have on hand, too. Spray a few of them with nasal spray and keep them in a sealed baggie. They're great for stopping nosebleeds like that. They're also good for bandaging small wounds or punctures, or for filling the space where a tooth has been pulled or knocked out.

Old (or New) T-Shirts

There's practically no end to the use that cotton T-shirts have in an emergency medical situation. They work as bandages, slings and even tourniquets. You can use them to put pressure on a wound to stop bleeding. T-shirts are good to wrap ice packs in. The sleeves make great headbands to hold on bandages covering head wounds. If the emergency happens to be a new baby, human or otherwise, T-shirts are great to wrap them in. T-shirts make great filters for water, too.



Sheets

Sheets have even more uses than T-shirts! They're absorbent and can be used as both regular and pressure bandages. They can be used as stretchers or blankets. Tear them to make slings or tie strips of sheets to make tourniquets. You can use them as water filters and gas mask filters, too. Blankets and towels can be used similarly.

Duct Tape



You had to have known we were going to bring up duct tape. That stuff has a place in every situation, including medical emergencies.

Use it to secure and waterproof bandages, bind together broken toes/fingers or to tape together a wood splint.

You can use it as an emergency suture to bind together two sides of a wound. Duct tape can even be used to seal a sucking chest wound.

Duct tape has even been shown to get rid of plantar warts. In 85% of the people who participated in a study, the wart disappeared after having a piece of duct tape

applied to it every day for about a week. Also, duct tape is a proper items to use when improvising a stretcher for carrying a wounded person.

Epsom Salt

This inexpensive salt is great for many things, including relieving sore muscles, easing the pain of sprains and bruises and making your skin softer. What you may not know is that the magnesium sulfate in Epsom salt is absorbed through your skin and actually sedates the nervous system as well as reduces swelling and draws toxins from the body.

Splinters can cause a major infection, especially if the wood was treated with chemicals. Soak the area with the splinter in a warm Epsom salt bath and it will draw the splinter out.

Popsicle Sticks, Yard Sticks, Rulers and Broom Sticks

All of these are useful as splints depending upon the body part that's broken. Broom sticks can also be used to fashion a stretcher and a Popsicle stick works well as a tourniquet handle.

Strainers



These are useful for catching kidney stones. Line it with a coffee filter and place it on the toilet seat. If it's too small to rest there, just hold it and pee in it.

The coffee filter stops the stone but lets the urine flow through. This can be helpful in diagnosing your kidney stone type so that you

can take proactive steps to avoid more.

Elmer's Glue or Shoe Goo

Both are great for removing splinters. Just smear a dab over the splinter, let it dry, and then gently pull it off. The splinter will come with it. This only works if the end of the splinter is sticking out a little bit.

Super Glue

If you can't get to the ER and you don't know how to do your own stitching (or just don't fancy the idea of sewing yourself up!) dab a bit of superglue on the clean, dry cut and squeeze the wound together. Hold for a few seconds just like you would if you were gluing anything else together.

Credit Cards

You can use a credit card to remove a bee stinger without releasing more venom or to remove a splinter. Just scrape the edge of the card over the stinger or splinter in the opposite direction than it went in at. You can also bend them in half lengthways and use the two halves to make a finger splint.

Rubbing Alcohol

Though it stings, alcohol is a fabulous antiseptic. Use it to clean wounds or to sterilize equipment before use.

Hydrogen Peroxide

Your body actually makes hydrogen peroxide to fight infection so it's only logical that you use it to clean wounds. It also stops slow bleeds coming from small vessels. It's also good to use as a wash on infected tissue or tissue that you have to debride. It works to clear dead tissue and will also do damage to live tissue if you leave it on for too long so don't soak for more than a few minutes.

Tube Socks or Stockings

These are great for holding bandages in place. To prepare them in advance, roll them over a soda bottle so that they stretch, then roll them off in a donut shape. Store them that way, then all you have to do is roll it up over the bandage. Cut the foot off if you'd like.



Your Own Hair

Scalp wounds, even small ones, bleed like crazy. If you go to the hospital to get it cleaned and stitched, they'll likely shave that spot so that bandages will stick.

If you can't get to the hospital, you still need to stop the bleeding and close the wound. Clean it and use the hair on either side of the wound to close the gash.

Tie the strands together to pull the wound together, then dab a bit of superglue on the knot to hold it.

Toothpaste

Toothpaste is a perfect item to use when you burn yourself on the stove in a minor way. Put your burned finger under cold water and follow up with some toothpaste – it will alleviate some of the pain.

Mouthwash

Mouthwash help you heal a bruise – rub the place of the skin with a splash of an alcohol-based mouthwash. It will not prevent the bruise completely, but you'll lose some of the black and blue.

Plastic Wrap



Plastic wrap makes an excellent safe wound dresser for people suffering thermal injuries, **en route to the emergency room of the hospital, then use specific bandage to cover the wound.** Plastic wrap reduces pain, wound contamination, and fluid losses.

This item is not expensive at all, and is widely available. More, plastic wrap is non-toxic, and it

makes really easy to observe the wound without dressing removal, considering that this item is transparent.

Bandana

You could turn a bandana into a perfect sling for an injured arm, or a tourniquet for snake bites or wounds where you need to cut circulation. More, while not using it as a sling, you can wear it as head and neck covering in order to prevent heatstroke or sunburn.

Sewing Supplies

Oddly enough, we rarely see sewing kits listed on survival lists but if we experience a TEOTWAWKI event, you're going to need one for many different reasons, and the first one is

suturing the wounds. I'm not talking about just a needle and thread: you need to have several different weights (and materials) of thread and very small to very large needles.

You're surrounded by average household items to use in a medical emergency; it's just a matter of thinking outside the box in order to come up with a solution. In order to live through any SHTF situation, you're going to have to learn to think like a survivor if you don't already.

Look around your house and use your imagination to come up with cool (but realistic) uses of the things that you work with every day! First, though, click through to Household Items to Use in a Medical Emergency Part II. We'll be talking about food and drink products that can be used for medical purposes.

Pantyhose

Pantyhose are extremely inexpensive and [have about a million uses](#), both for survival and for everyday living.

Use pantyhose as a dust mask - they're not perfect and won't keep out toxins but if you have to walk through an area with heavy ash or dust in the air, putting pantyhose over your face bank robber-style will help keep out the larger debris so that you're not sucking all of that stuff into your lungs. You can put them over your air filter in your car to keep it from sucking ash or dust into the motor, too.

Listerine

You've undoubtedly gargled with Listerine mouthwash at least once in your life and experienced that eye-watering burn. That's because of the alcohol content in it and that makes it a great household item to use in medical emergencies.

Plain or flavored either one will work though the flavored is a bit sticky. Just pour it right on the wound to kill infection or to sterilize equipment.



Edible Household Items to Use in a Medical Emergency

In the first part of this series, we talked about non-edible household items that you can use in a medical emergency. In this part, we wanted to talk about all of the items that you use for cooking and baking that may help save your life, or at least get rid of indigestion!

There are dozens of items in your kitchen that have therapeutic uses and there's no way that we listed them all. We do hope that this list made you think and helped to get you on the right track.

Hippocrates said, "Let food be thy medicine and let medicine be thy food."

What you eat truly does affect your health but some items have a curative effect that you may find instantly helpful. Without further ado, let's get to it!

Salt

Salt is a real treasure for your emergency kit: gargle or rinse with salt to help a sore throat, canker sore or toothache. Use a salt bath to draw infection or swelling out of minor wounds or aching muscles. Salt also relieves the itch or pain from bug bites and stings

Salt can be used for bee stings, mosquito stings, poison ivy and any other types of problems that cause rashes and itchy skin. The salt will not reduce inflammation and will not make the rashes disappear, but it will cool down the skin and get rid of that itchy sensation. What you need to do is apply a cloth which has been soaked in saltwater to act as a compress.



Alternatively, you can also dampen the affected area and simply apply a handful of salt to it. For the latter, it is important to make sure there are no open wounds. Applying salt in this case would be really painful.

Any kind of sores in the mouth such as abscesses and cankers can be dealt with using salt. What you need to do is to rinse your mouth several times a day using warm water with a little salt in it. It will help deal with the pain, but make sure not to put too much salt in it.

When resources are scarce, salt can also be used to look after your teeth. First of all, it can be used to extend the life of a toothbrush by simply soaking it in saltwater.

Furthermore, a very efficient solution can be made by combining one part of fine salt with two parts of baking soda. This mixture can be used on a toothbrush to act as a toothpaste replacement. It can also be mixed with water and used as a rinsing solution.

Sugar

If you find a survivor, that has deep lacerations, but is not bleeding badly, take your bag of sugar out of your pack, pour liberally into the wound, then wrap the wound with an "ace" bandage.

The sugar is sterile and acts as a coagulant. The “ace” bandage will add the pressure required to keep the wound closed. A very simple, effective way to prep someone for transport. The sugar is also easily washed out of a wound without causing further damage.

Coconut Water

Coconut water is a great drink to keep you hydrated but it’s also been used historically to replace human plasma in battle when blood isn’t available. Inside the coconut, it’s sterile and can be injected directly into the vein without any ill effects. As a matter of fact, even the naysayers don’t dispute that it would be an acceptable emergency substitute.

The only problem is that it’s lower in sodium and higher in potassium than plasma so it’s only good for short-term use.

Honey



In addition to tasting delicious in tea and in baklava, honey has some pretty nifty health benefits. When you eat local honey, it’s said to help with allergies, which is great. The real use in an emergency though lies in the antibacterial, antimicrobial and emollient properties.

Rub a bit into a cut to prevent infection and add a layer to a burn to kill bacteria and keep it moist.

Western health professionals admonish against giving honey to infants because of the risk of

botulism, but it’s completely harmless to adults. Oh, and did we mention that honey doesn’t spoil? It may crystallize but if it does, just warm it up a bit and it’s good to go again.

Black Pepper

Black pepper adds spice and pep to your dishes but did you know that it also has antiseptic, analgesic and antibacterial properties. Oh, and it also helps stop bleeding and doesn't sting. If you cut yourself, clean the wound then rub a bit of black pepper into it. You'll stop bleeding and feel better in no time, plus it'll help keep it from getting infected.

Vinegar

First, let's differentiate between white vinegar and apple cider vinegar. White vinegar is a fermentation of dilute ethyl alcohol. Apple cider vinegar is a natural product made from fermented apples/juice.

Keeping both on hand would be ideal but if you have to choose one or the other to stockpile, we would suggest going with apple cider vinegar, hands down. Let's see how to use the vinegar:

- Spritz on your skin to relieve eczema and other skin conditions
- Kills bacteria on your face that causes acne
- Helps reduce night sweats associated with menopause
- Mix with water to relieve painful sunburn
- Antibiotic properties help cuts and scrapes heal faster and with less scarring
- Kills the itch and odor associated with yeast infection. Drink an ounce or so in the morning to fight the yeast internally and swab/douche with diluted vinegar to stop the itching and kill the yeast externally
- Kills dandruff
- Antibacterial properties help kill bugs that cause a sore throat when you gargle with it

Apple Cider Vinegar

Actually, either vinegar will work but for some reason, we've always fallen back to apple-cider vinegar. Maybe it's just because of the extra flavor! At any rate, vinegar at 5%, which is the standard, is extremely effective against most, but not all, common bacteria.

ACV is also a killer anti-fungal but be careful to dilute it if you're going to put it right on your skin because it WILL burn you, especially if the skin is broken.

Frozen Peas



Need an ice pack but don't have any ice? Use a frozen bag of peas. They break up nicely so that you can form the bag to most any body part.

Wrap them in a towel so that you don't damage your skin with the low temperatures. Either hold the bag of peas to the body part or use a towel or T-shirt to secure the bag to your limb.

Juice, Sugar Cubes or Chocolate Squares for Diabetic Emergency

Diabetes is nothing to mess with because it can quite literally kill the patient. The tricky part is knowing whether the person has had too much sugar or not enough. Low blood sugar, called hypoglycemia, is a true medical emergency, especially if the person has already passed out. The best way is to test their blood sugar with a special kit but that may not be possible.

If the person is conscious, symptoms include double vision, confusion and sweating. However, these symptoms are, unfortunately, common to both high and low blood sugar. To get a better idea, smell the person's breathe. If it smells fruity, the person's sugar may be high. Don't give them any more sugar.



If you know that they're diabetic, find out what they've eaten and when they ate it. If they haven't eaten carbs in a while and they're symptomatic, give them a couple sugar cubes, a small glass of juice or a square of chocolate.

These are relatively safe (as opposed to a piece of hard candy that can be choked upon) and if the patient begins to feel better within a few minutes, you have a pretty good idea that you're on the right track.

Oatmeal Bath

Rashes from poison oak, ivy or sumac, or from an allergic reaction can be extremely irritating. This is miserable for an adult but to a kid, the scratching may be uncontrollable. Grinding up a couple of cups of oatmeal and putting it in a bath will help tons. You can also make a paste out of it.

Baking Soda

This is good for occasional indigestion and it's a suitable emergency treatment for urinary tract infections. 1/4 teaspoon mixed in 8oz of water once daily helps to make the bladder environment more alkaline, which inhibits the growth of bacteria. A little dab on a bug bite provides relief from itching and a paste is good for yeast and fungal infections.

Vodka

Yes, it's great for drinking socially but vodka has an extremely high percentage of pure alcohol, which makes it a fabulous disinfectant. It's going to sting but pour it over the wound or over the tool to sterilize it.

Also, if you have a wicked procedure that you absolutely **MUST** perform, such as stitching them up without a numbing agent, a couple of swigs of vodka 15 minutes in advance may help make it more tolerable. Be careful with this though because too much will thin the blood and make them bleed more.

Eggshells

That thin layer of membrane between the white and the shell of an egg is packed with protein and is said to help burns and cuts heal more quickly with less scarring. Just peel the membrane carefully from the shell and place it right on the wound.

You can also use eggshells for keeping you healthy. Bake them and grind them into a powder. Add a tablespoon to your breakfast to boost your calcium intake.

Cloves

You probably like them with your ham or in pie, but you can also use cloves on cuts. The eugenol in it is both an antiseptic and an analgesic so rub a bit of clove powder on a cut to disinfect it and ease the pain. The same thing goes for tooth pain. Just chew on some cloves or rub some clove oil on your gums.

Lemon Juice

Yes, you can make some great lemonade, which would certainly boost morale, but there are several good uses for lemon juice that earn it a spot on our list:

- Disinfectant. Pour a few drops directly on your wound or apply with a cotton ball. It also helps it stop bleeding.
- Indigestion/stomach upset. Mix a few drops with water and drink.
- Relieve poison ivy symptoms.
- Natural decongestant. Helps reduce phlegm and ease difficult breathing.
- A few drops per day in your water helps prevent kidney stones.



- Treat diphtheria. Research shows that swallowing 1/2 to 1 tablespoon of lemon juice every hour or so will release the faux membrane that forms in your throat so that it can come out.