

## **Essential First Aid Kit Items For the Elderly**

**by Sally Writes**

Every home should have a first aid kit, with the essentials for dealing with any small accidents. Make sure that your first aid kit is put somewhere that's easy to find, and that you check it regularly for items that might go out of date. If you are a carer and have put together a kit for a senior, label it with a large red or green cross, so that it is easily identifiable. This is particularly important if it's for an elderly person with impaired memory, as dementia can affect safety in the home.

### **Antiseptic wipes and cream**

In the case of cuts and bruises, antiseptic wipes and cream are an essential. The wipes are quick and convenient to help clean any injured area. They can also be used to quickly wipe over your own hands if you are helping someone if they have hurt themselves. It is important then to use a thin layer of antiseptic cream before covering a cut or other small wound. This will help to prevent any infection.

### **Gauze, pads and steri-strip**

Elderly people generally have skin that is quite thin, and prone to getting cuts easily. Particular areas to look out for are the backs of the hands and the top of the head. It is important that any cuts are dealt with quickly and covered. Steri-strip is an incredibly versatile first aid kit item as it can be used to gently close any wider cuts and keep the skin in place so that it can heal easily. Cotton wool pads and gauze are another medicine cabinet must have, as they can be used to cover and protect wider areas.

### **Band-Aids**

You should keep a wide selection of Band-Aids, for different areas of the body. The elbows and knees are particularly prone to knocks and scrapes. It is also a good idea to keep a long Band-Aid strip that you can cut down to size if needs be.

### **Cold Packs and Thermal Patches**

Having a cold pack is an essential in a first aid kit. If someone has had a bump on the head, using a cold pack on it quickly can significantly cut down the level of bruising. Thermal Patches can be used to soothe aches and pains, and are particularly good for easing arthritis.

Finally make sure that you check any expiration dates on medicines and ointments in your first aid kit. If you use something from it, make a note of it, so that it can be replaced. First aid kits are an essential for every home, and can make a big difference in dealing with small injuries.