



OTC Medications You Should Store



Things to Keep in Mind About OTC Medicines

- Read the back of the label for active ingredients.
- Make sure you store medicines appropriately.
- Keep out of the reach of young children.
- Seek proper health care when needed, talk to a doctor or pharmacist.
- If you have a significant medical condition, seek help from your doctor as soon as it's safe to do so.
- Drug interactions affect people differently.
- Know there could be an increased risk of side effects.

Pain Relievers:

- **Aspirin** - Aspirin is not only a fever and headache reducer, but it also reduces toothaches, some swelling, and the inflammation that causes muscles to ache. Be careful not to give aspirin to young children with a fever, severe health challenges like Reye's syndrome can occur. Also, be aware that aspirin is a blood thinner and overuse can cause bleeding issues.
- **Tylenol** - Tylenol is similar to aspirin in taking care of most pain or discomfort. You can even grind it into a powder and rub it on irritated skin for relief. Make sure you use the recommended dosing. Note that there are doses for different ages, so get some that will cover the needs of your whole family.
- **Aleve** - Aleve will rid you of most aches and pains and also help reduce fevers and headaches. It even works on menstrual cramps and arthritis. While it might be similar to the previous two pain relievers, its benefits tend to have a longer-lasting effect.
- **Advil** - While it might work better on headaches, Advil is believed to work more effectively on pain, fever, and inflammation. You don't want to use any medicines past their expiration date.
- **Excedrin** - Excedrin works great on migraines and tension headaches, along with reducing fevers and colds. It even works on nasal congestion.
- **Orajel** - After a crisis happens, taking a trip to the dentist might not be an option. Orajel is a numbing medication that will help reduce toothaches, minor gum irritation and also helps with sore throats and canker sores. It can really come in handy until you can get professional help. Keep in mind, if there is any chance that the oral pain could be an abscess, be sure to take the person to a dentist, if they are open, or an ER if not. With the jaw bone so close to the brain, any infection needs immediate attention!

Digestive Issues:

- **Tums or Rolaids** - Tums and Rolaids will work to provide minor relief from heartburn and upset stomach by lowering stomach acid buildup. Be sure and check out the brand that seems to work best for you and your family before you stock up on several packages.
- **Pepto-Bismol** - When you're faced with tummy issues during an emergency, this antidiarrheal drug is one you can't go without. Pepto-Bismol works on stomach issues including diarrhea, heartburn, stomach discomfort, gas, and nausea.
- **Pepcid-AC** - Pepcid AC works on preventing reoccurring stomach ulcers. It also covers heartburn and gastroesophageal reflux disease and is proven to work much quicker.
- **Nexium** - Another useful stomach reliever to have on hand would be Nexium. Not only will it fight stomach discomfort, ulcers, and heartburn, but it can help heal acid damage to the stomach and the esophagus.
- **Imodium** - Another medication that helps fight diarrhea, Imodium will decrease the number of bowel movements and watery stool. You really have to be careful that you or a loved one doesn't get dehydrated from throwing up and having diarrhea at the same time. We've had family members end up in the hospital after "going" at both ends for a few days. Like the adage says, "drink lots of liquids."
- **Milk of Magnesia** - If you're suffering from constipation, Milk of Magnesia works as a laxative by adding water to your intestines and taking away discomfort. It also works on sour stomach and heartburn.
- **Alka-Seltzer** - This medication fights a number of problems, including stomach ache, inflammation, indigestion, pain, fevers, and even hangovers.

Cold and Flu:

- **Dayquil** - Catching a cold or fever during or after a crisis without anything to fight it can be a real problem. Dayquil fights a number of symptoms, including cough, stuffy nose, fever, flu-like symptoms, body aches, and headaches.
- **Mucinex-DM** - If you're having a rough time sleeping from all the coughing and mucus build-up in your throat, Mucinex DM just became the remedy you're looking for.
- **Robitussin** - Robitussin helps relieve constant coughing by reducing chest congestion. For Diabetics, it sounds like you have Diabetic-Tussin. The brand called Halls has sugar-free lozenges that could provide some relief.
- **Sudafed and Sudafed PE** - Sudafed PE provides short-term relief for nasal congestion while having pain-relieving benefits at the same time. It helps with the common cold and respiratory allergies. You can get Sudafed behind the pharmacy counter by showing your driver's license. They will ask you for your phone number as well here in Utah. I believe you can get four packages per year per driver's license here in Utah. Be sure to check this out in your location so you won't be surprised at the store.
- **Nyquil** - Nyquil works similar to Dayquil by fighting the same symptoms, yet causes drowsiness and helps you sleep at night. Be cautious with any medications that indicate they can prompt sleep. You shouldn't drive or run machines and equipment.

Allergies:

- **Zyrtec** - Struggling with sneezing, a runny nose, or itchy and watery eyes? Zyrtec is an antihistamine that will work on all of those for much-needed relief. It's also great for reducing rashes like hives.
- **Claritin** - Claritin is another allergy relief medication that works similarly to Zyrtec. It really depends on the patient to find which one works better than the other.
- **Benadryl** - Benadryl fights symptoms such as rashes, sneezing or a runny nose, and itchy and watery eyes. It can also be taken to prevent vomiting, nausea, and dizziness. Benadryl is critical to have on hand for emergencies. Some people indicate it can cause drowsiness.
- **Allegra** - Allegra is another antihistamine that works on most minor allergy cases.

Skin Irritation/Wounds/Bandages:

- **Aspercreme** - Aspercreme will help treat minor aches and pains in your muscles and joints.
- **Lotrimin** - If you are suffering from a yeast infection, ringworm, jock itch, or athlete's foot, Lotrimin may provide the relief you're looking for.
- **Cortizone 10** - Cortizone 10 works great on bug bites, poison ivy, allergies, rash, and even eczema, by reducing the swelling, redness, and itching that may occur.
- **Neosporin, Bacitracin, or Polysporin** - Everyone should have this in their stock to prepare for a catastrophe. If you're suffering from a minor burn, wound, or cut, Neosporin will help keep bacteria from causing infections. It is suggested that for long-term use you steer clear of Neosporin and try one of the other two based on its contents.

Misc. Medications:

- **Charcoal Tablets** - Charcoal tablets help filter out undigested toxins and poisons that might have been ingested.
- **Melatonin** - Anxiety, stress, and insomnia more than likely will keep you awake after a devastating crisis. Having a stockpile of melatonin, or other sleeping aids will help you get the rest you desperately need and help you make better decisions.
- **Potassium Iodine Tablets** - If there were ever a radiation emergency, potassium iodide tablets could help the thyroid from taking on excessive radioactive iodine.
- **Electrolytes** - During a crisis situation, you want to ensure your body is getting all the electrolytes needed for your body to function properly. This also ties into the discussion earlier about dehydration. Some of your body functions can shut down if you've lost a lot of your electrolytes.
- **Dramamine** - Dramamine will provide relief from nausea, vomiting, or motion sickness.
- **QuikClot** - You never know when you're going to need something to stop significant bleeding. QuikClot might just very well save your life. If there is any way to get the person affected by the puncture or severe cut to the hospital after you've administered the necessary first aid treatments, do it.
- **Multivitamins** - Although technically not an over-the-counter medication, multivitamins will make sure you're body is getting the right nutrients and minerals needed when you're probably not eating the most nutritious food after an emergency. As we age, we need to consider supplementing our body's nutrients with a variety of vitamins and minerals. Ask your doctor for advice regarding the most critical ones to take.
- **Epsom Salts** - Epsom Salt is another useful item to have, to reduce stress and relax the body. It sounds like the perfect solution to put in your next bath water after a crisis. Many of my readers soak their feet in Epsom Salt to find relief for very sore feet.
- **Rubbing Alcohol** - Used for cleaning pierced ears, disinfecting dish rags and sponges, and as a hand sanitizer.
- **Hydrogen Peroxide** - You can use it to disinfect your toothbrushes and mouth guards. It's great for disinfecting your nail or pedicure tools.
- **Diaper Rash Ointments/Creams** - It's critical we stock some diaper rash cream. We may not need it but someone in an emergency center may.
- **Voltaren** - This is good for arthritis according to a reader.
- **Temparin Lost Filling Repair** - This is a TEMPORARY fix until you can see a dentist.
- **Calamine Lotion** - This works great for so many skin rashes.
- **Garlic Capsules and Red Yeast Rice Capsules** - These are used for cholesterol without the side effects of statins.