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## Basic Medical Kit for High School Sports: A Guide

Joel O'Dell, LAT, ATC, is an Athletic Trainer for **Physiotherapy Associates** and provides Sports Medicine services at **Des Moines Lincoln High School**. He has spent the past 14 years treating athletic injuries from recreational athletes to professionals and everything in between.

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 where ever 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**.

*Physiotherapy Associates are the sports medicine providers for the Boys' State Basketball, Soccer & Baseball Tournaments.*

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