

First-aid kit, just in case

Scars are the evidence left behind of something that went wrong. Scars can be from accidents, or in my case, temporary loss of sanity. I have a few that were from blinding acts of idiocy. Some scars we can wear like a medal for bravery while others serve as a reminder.

I remember going off the back of an ATV once. I attempted to climb a hill that was much too steep and went right off the back of the machine. The machine did an immediate “turn around” and started back down the hill.

Since I was laying in the trail, face-up, flat on my back, and feet toward the oncoming machine, I had a full view of the proceedings. The machine ran me over, leaving me with several new additions to my scar collection. Unfortunately, the locations of the scars are not on a portion of my anatomy that would normally be seen at my wife’s garden club meetings.

If you head up into the mountains, and take your sport seriously, you are eventually going to hurt yourself. If you haven’t, either you are very lucky or just not passionate about the sport, or Murphy has been busy with someone else.

I must be pretty passionate (or incredibly unlucky and clumsy) because I have damaged quite a few portions of my personal anatomy over the years and have a wonderful collection of scars to prove it.

Most of these injuries were minor but several have been more on the serious side. As I look at a scar a couple inches long on my leg, a result of a hunting trip mishap, I felt it necessary to write a piece on an important piece of equipment, the IFAK.

The IFAK stands for Individual First Aid Kit. This kit, coupled with the knowledge of how to use it, can save your life or that of a hunting partner.

Over the years I have gone from



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

carrying nothing as a kit, to something about the size of an ambulance, and then back again. When I was a kid, which was probably before they invented things like infection, sterile and germs, I would dam up the blood flow from a cut using a piece of my grungy t-shirt. It worked well enough, save the wrath of a furious mother upon my return home. As I have grown

older, and perhaps seen more than a fair share of injuries with my career, I have learned the importance of the IFAK.

I limit the kit to just the life-saving emergency items. Things like a blister, splinter or small bumps and bruises I can deal with back at camp or the truck. This kit is just to keep you alive in case Murphy of Murphy’s Law fame wreaks havoc on your trip.

Here are a few basic items to get you started:

- A few band-aids — varying sizes, just to keep an annoying little cut from bleeding all over your equipment.
- Quik Clot Sport, for more serious cuts.
- Swat-T tourniquet, for the really serious bleeding.
- 4 inch size Israeli Bandage, battle proven.
- 2 inch ACE wrap.
- 2 inch Gauze wrap.
- 1 inch athletic tape.
- Ibuprofen or Tylenol for an annoying headache.
- Benadryl (for any possible allergies; like bee stings).
- Nitrile gloves.
- Imodium pills, because diarrhea can really ruin a day.
- Any prescription drugs you are required to have.

The overall size of the above kit is small enough to fit in any size fanny pack, backpack or even a jacket pocket. The general idea is that if you keep it small enough, you won’t leave home without it. After all, the kit does not do



These are a few of the important items I carry in my personal IFAK. You can customize your kit to the needs of the trip and personal requirements. (Special to the Montrose Daily Press/Mark Rackay)

any good for you if it is sitting in a box on a closet shelf at home.

You can customize your kit with other items as you see a need. That was how I got into trouble with the oversize kit I created. It got so big that it consumed my entire backpack. Since it left little room for anything else, like food and clothes, I figured it was time to rethink this.

This kit should be in addition to a much larger one you might carry in your ATV, vehicle or back at camp. For extended trips, or trips with a larger number of people, a more extensive kit would be required. You may also consider how far away you’re going to be from medical service and how long your hunt is going to be.

The most important thing to do would be to get some training in first aid and CPR. Aside from formal

classes, there are hundreds of books and instructional DVDs on the subject. The more you train and study, the better prepared you will be in the event you have an emergency.

You can download first-aid manuals, instructions and reference guides onto your cell phone. These are much easier to carry around and you don’t need cell service to access the information once it is downloaded.

Hopefully you and I won’t need to practice your first-aid skills on any personal injuries. I know I sure don’t need another scar in my collection.

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