

Medicine Chest Checklist for Infants and Children

A well-stocked medicine chest or cabinet can be very helpful when your child has an injury or illness. Keeping all the supplies in one place like a portable bag can be helpful. We've compiled a handy list of essentials, and a few extras, to get you started.

1. A reliable **thermometer** is essential. Rectal temperatures are most accurate for infants in the first year of life. Digital thermometers can provide quick readings. Our experience with ear thermometers is that they are often not accurate.
2. **Fever reducers** come in infant and children's strengths. Both acetaminophen (*Tylenol*) and ibuprofen (*Advil, Motrin*) are safe and effective when used according to dosing guidelines.
3. **Antibiotic ointment** can speed the healing of superficial cuts and scrapes and are available over-the-counter without a prescription.
4. **Petroleum jelly** is used to lubricate the rectal thermometer, and works for well as a winter-moisturizer or protective ointment.
5. **Infant Gas Reliever** (*Mylicon* drops) can safely break down painful gas bubbles some infants experience. If your baby is not feeding well, discuss other possible causes with your baby's doctor.
6. **Diaper Creams** especially those containing zinc oxide can be helpful when the baby's bottom is irritated from diarrhea or cleaning. Apply with each diaper change. Be extra gentle when cleaning and drying irritated skin.
7. **Moisturizing Cream or ointment** is essential for skin that becomes dry or cracked, especially during the winter months. Low scent formulations are best for sensitive skin.
8. **Saline Drops** are helpful for little stuffy noses, especially when combined with a **Nasal Aspirator**.
9. **Cool Mist Humidifier** at the bedside can also be helpful.
10. **Decongestant medications** can be used in some children. The doctor or nurse may suggest this medication for some childhood illnesses. We do not recommend over-the-counter cough medications under the age of 3 years.
11. **Hydrocortisone cream or ointment** is available without a prescription and can help with some itchy rashes. We suggest a consultation during office hours before starting treatment of a new rash.
12. **Benadryl liquid** is a helpful medication to have in the medicine chest. It is used for itchy rashes like poison ivy and eczema, or if the child develops hives. We would suggest you call the doctor or nurse before starting this medication even though it is available without a prescription.

13. **A medicine dropper, oral syringe, or calibrated spoon** for administering medications.
14. **Rubbing alcohol** is used to clean thermometers, tweezers, and scissors. Do not use on baby's skin for fever control! Like all medications, keep out of reach of children!
15. **Baby nail clippers or scissors** for trimming tiny little nails.
16. **Sharp scissors with rounded tips** for trimming bandages.
17. **Bandages in assorted sizes**
18. **Sterile gauze pads** (The *Telfa* brand will not stick to wounds).
19. **Cotton balls** for gentle cleaning.
20. **Tweezers** for splinter and tick removal.
21. **Ice packs** can decrease swelling following injuries.
22. **Gauze rolls**
23. **Adhesive tape**
24. In the summer months, **child-safe insect repellent** and **child-safe sunscreens** can be helpful during outdoor activities. We do not recommend usage of either under the age of six months.
25. A **First-Aid Manual** can be a helpful reference. There are many available in the bookstore.
26. **List of phone numbers, including your pediatrician and local ambulance, police, and poison-control center (1-800-222-1222)**