

BACK TO BASICS BULLETIN

Preserve and Provide



Feature Story

The Woman Who Turned Compassion Into a System

In April 1861, Clara Barton was working as a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office when the first wounded soldiers of the Civil War arrived in Washington, D.C., hungry, without bedding, some still in their fighting clothes. She didn't wait for someone to organize a response. She gathered supplies herself, then talked her way onto the front lines, earning the name "Angel of the Battlefield."

Twenty years later, that instinct became an institution. In 1881, she founded the American Red Cross, modeled after a Swiss relief network she'd seen in Europe. By 1882, the U.S. ratified the Geneva Convention to include protecting the wounded.

What Barton built wasn't complicated. It's the same thing a traveler does in Luke 10 for a stranger beaten on the road to Jericho: he stops, bandages the wounds, and pays for the man's care himself (Luke 10:33–35). The priest and the Levite passed by first, men with every reason and duty to stop. They didn't. Only the Samaritan showed mercy, and Jesus names that, not status or training, as the mark of a true neighbor.

Barton didn't have modern medicine either, no antibiotics, no sterile technique for two more decades. What she had was the willingness to act on what she knew, and the persistence to make sure the next person wouldn't start from nothing.

That's the whole premise behind a first aid kit. You don't need to be a nurse to stop bleeding, cool a burn, or know when a fever means "call the doctor" instead of "wait it out." You need what the Samaritan had: attention, a few basic supplies, and the willingness to stop. This month, the kit is how you carry that forward.



Get Trained, Not Just Stocked

A kit only helps as much as the person using it knows what to do. The American Red Cross offers Adult First Aid/CPR and AED classes in-person, online, or blended (self-paced online plus an in-person skills check) typically running \$30–75 depending on format and location, and valid for two years once certified.

If your household includes young kids, look for the Adult and Pediatric version, same course, expanded to cover infant and child emergencies too.

Find a class near you: [Red Cross - Take a Class](#)

Herbal Remedies for the Home

- Ginger Tea — grate 1 tsp fresh ginger into a cup of hot water, steep 5–10 minutes. Traditionally *used for nausea and upset stomach*.
- Chamomile Tea — 1 tsp dried flowers (or a tea bag) steeped 5 minutes. Mild, calming, commonly *used before bed or for a fussy stomach*.
- Honey — a teaspoon plain, or stirred into warm water with lemon, is a well-studied option for *soothing a cough*. Never give honey to a child under 1 year old — it carries a risk of infant botulism.
- Echinacea and Elderberry — the two most researched herbs for *cold and flu support*. Evidence is mixed but generally favorable for shortening symptom duration when taken at the first sign of illness. Available as tea, tincture, or capsule.

A few things worth knowing before you stock any of these:

- The FDA doesn't review supplements for safety or effectiveness before they hit the shelf the way it does medications — quality varies by brand.
- Herbs can interact with prescription medications in ways that aren't always obvious. If anyone in your household takes regular medication, check with a doctor or pharmacist *before* adding a new herb, not after.
- None of this replaces medical care for anything serious. Herbal remedies are for mild, everyday things — not a substitute for calling a doctor when something doesn't resolve or gets worse.

For a deeper, unbiased look at any specific herb, check out the National Institutes of Health. They keep updated fact sheets: [NCCIH — Herbs at a Glance](#).

[CLICK HERE](#)

3-Tier Budgeting Pathway

Tier 1 – Basic Kit Build (\$15–30)

Assemble the Red Cross-standard kit:

- 25 assorted adhesive bandages
- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5"x9")
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 1 roll gauze bandage
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4"x4")
- 2 pairs nonlatex gloves
- tweezers
- oral thermometer
- 2 triangular bandages
- instant cold compress

Buy it in one trip or spread it across two. Either way, store it all in one labeled container (an old shoebox or tackle box works) somewhere you'll actually reach for it, not buried behind cleaning supplies.

Tier 2 – Injury-Specific Supplies (\$40–80)

Build past the basics toward things a scraped knee doesn't need but a bad fall or kitchen accident does:

- a SAM splint (moldable, reusable, about \$15–20)
- larger gauze rolls and non-stick pads in assorted sizes
- medical tape
- an ACE bandage
- butterfly closures for cuts that need holding together but not stitches
- burn gel dressing

Tier 3 – Whole-Household + Grab-and-Go (\$100–200+, build over time)

- Scale Tier 1 and 2 supplies to your actual household size, double the bandages and gauze if you're a family of four rather than two.
- Add a second, smaller kit that lives in the car, built to handle heat and cold without the contents degrading (some ointments and adhesives break down in a hot trunk).
- Include a 3-day supply of any regular prescriptions, kids' medication with correct dosing already noted, and a printed quick-reference card for when panic makes it hard to remember steps you know perfectly well on a calm day.

Tips & Tricks

- A quick-reference chart for common household medications that are safe (and unsafe) for your pets. [Read more](#)
- Seven common household items and their possible uses for home, medicinal and personal care. [Read more](#)

Tell Us How It Went

♥ Love the newsletter?

 Did you try this month's challenge?

CLICK HERE



Challenge of the Month: First Aid Ready Check

Option 1: “First Aid Scavenger Hunt”

Ask another adult or older child in the house to find a specific first aid item fast: a bandage, gauze, thermometer, antiseptic, or ointment. Use only what you already have, wherever it currently lives. If they have to search too long, that's your sign to organize your supplies so everyone knows where to find what they need.

Option 2: “Expiration Check”

For households that already have some first aid supplies: pull everything out, check every expiration date (antiseptic, ointments, any medications in the kit), and replace what's expired.

