

A Peek Inside Ed Mapes' Onboard Medical Kit

A wide spectrum of antibiotics and over-the-counter meds fills the gaps in standard kits.

The following is a short list of components in Dr. Ed Mapes' own medical kit, one that has evolved over the last 30 years of sailing.

Lactated Ringers Solution—Sterile, bagged intravenous fluid, should anyone become severely dehydrated due to gastrointestinal disorder, seasickness, fever, shock, etc. Even if you're unable to install an intravenous catheter, the sterile liquid can be given subcutaneously, and is useful for flushing contaminated wounds.

Chig-Gard—After experiencing chigger infestation on a deserted Bahamian island, this became a staple in Mapes' kit.

Lanacaine—Provides relief for even the worst skin itch, like that from prolonged saltwater exposure.

Compazine (prochlorperazine, 25 mg)—In cases of severe vomiting, this will help control stomach spasms. Useful for treating severe seasickness, it's also a mild sedative. It is also available in suppositories, but must be refrigerated.

Senekot—A mild laxative.

Doxycycline (100 mg capsules)—This is a broad-spectrum (non-penicillin) antibiotic useful for skin lesions.

Erythromycin (250 mg capsules)—This medicine is great for staphylococcus infections, and it's not a penicillin.

Bactrim DS (500 mg tablets)—One tablet daily should be taken for bladder infections.

Corticosporin drops—A preferred treatment for swimmer's ear.

Tylenol No. 3 (30 mg tablets)—This medicine contains codeine, so it can be given to control pain.

Valium (10 mg tablets)—A sedative for seasickness, insomnia, and hysteria.

Cavit—This may be included in an onboard dental kit. It is used to pack dental cavities.

Gatorade—To combat fever, or help prevent or correct electrolyte imbalances and fluid losses.

Super glue—Useful for closing small skin lacerations, along with bandaging.