

EVA HAYNAL FORSYTH

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WOODWARD & LOTHROP

WEDDING

Travel Emergency Kit

First-aid essentials to pack for your trip. By Jean Sherman

Have you heard the honeymoon horror story about the bride who got so badly sunburned that her husband couldn't touch her without moving her to tears? How about the groom who drank foreign water and stayed locked in the bathroom while his wife toured the countryside? Or the couple that got so seasick on their honeymoon cruise, they spent four days in a state of moaning nausea?

Chances are the only downside of your honeymoon will be that it's ending too soon. But it does pay to pack a few precautionary items to ensure that your honeymoon will be healthy, as well as happy.

PORTABLE MEDICINE CHEST

Leave pain behind. Analgesics, in coated tablets, are your best bet for pain, fever and inflammation—the sort you would get from a strained muscle or sunburn, says Bradley A. Connor, M.D., medical director of Travel Health Services in N.Y., NY. Ibuprofen (such as Nuprin and Advil) works like aspirin. But unlike aspirin, it won't irritate the stomach. Although acetaminophen (like Anacin-3 and Tylenol) takes care of pain and fever, it doesn't remedy inflammation.

Wave bon voyage to motion sickness. Antinausea medications come in several basic forms. Tablets like Bonine are taken when you feel the nausea of motion sickness coming on. Dramamine, a preventive drug, is taken before motion sickness occurs. Behind-the-ear patches (Trans-derm Scopes is one brand) prevent the nausea and vomiting of motion sickness for up to three days at a time. This is the best option if you're going to be water-bound. Be aware, however, of potential side effects—dryness in the mouth, drowsiness.

Remedy upset stomachs. Number one on Dr. Connor's list of tummy tamers is Pepto-Bismol, in easy-to-pack tablet form. "When diarrhea starts, I recommend that you take two tablets every half hour for four doses," says Dr. Connor. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's directions before use. If discomfort persists, consult a physician; he or she may

prescribe a stronger remedy.

Some doctors steer clear of prescribing antibiotics for diarrhea because of the occasional side effects that accompany them. "For example," Dr. Connor notes, "tetracycline results in extra-sensitivity to the sun and can lead to sunburn."

After a night of overdoing it, you'll be glad you packed antacid tablets. These over-the-counter wonders (like Maalox and Mylanta) are especially helpful when strange cuisines are wreaking havoc with your digestive system.

Soothe "honeymoon cystitis." That's what doctors commonly call it, though medically, it is called a urinary tract infection. The nickname resulted from the fact that this ailment is all too common during periods of increased sexual activity—like a honeymoon. Ask your doctor to prescribe just-in-case medication (Pyridium to take away the pain, Bactrim or Septra for the treatment of infection), should you experience these common symptoms: burning during urination, increased frequency of urination and—in particularly bad cases—blood in your urine.

Guard against sunburn. This falls under the category of preventive medicine. Pack sunblock; start at sun protection factor (SPF) 15. If you have very fair or sensitive skin, begin with a higher SPF. You can decrease the levels once your skin adapts. And wear a wide-brimmed hat.

Clean out cuts. It can't hurt to be prepared for occasional scratches, nicks, and cuts. Just spread a thin layer of antibacterial ointment, cover with a Band-Aid, and you're all set. Some products (like bacitracin) come in packable packages.

Get necessary shots. Of course, these aren't packable, but if you'll be traveling outside of North America, Hawaii, the Caribbean, or Europe, there's a good chance that you'll need them. To get the latest information about disease control in the country of your choice, call Travel Health Services in N.Y., NY: 212-734-3000. Or, call the Center for Prevention Services, Division of Quarantine/Travelers Health Activity, Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA: 404-639-2572. □