



First Aid Kit

Mozambique.co.mz recommends that you pack a basic first aid kit. We have given a suggested list of items below to treat the most common minor emergencies. Having these items handy will make your visit in Mozambique more comfortable if a minor emergency arises. Remember that some areas in Mozambique are still very remote and you might not be able to find some of the items in this list. These items will treat burns, cuts, abrasions, splinters, fever, nasal congestion, coughs, mild pain, gastrointestinal problems, skin problems and allergies.

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You can buy all items for your first aid kit in a well-stocked drug store or pharmacy. Consult your doctor on some of the items mentioned, or ask the pharmacist for help in selecting items.

Make sure you know how to properly use all of the items in your kit, especially the medications. Train others in your group on how to use the kit. You may be the one who needs first aid. Also make sure that you store your kit in a safe place, and that everyone who is travelling with you, knows where it is located.

If you are travelling with children, prepare them for medical emergencies in age-appropriate ways. This can be as simple as teaching them how to get help in case of an emergency, or how to call [Emergency Services](#).

Take your first aid kit with you if you are going on a boat. If you already have a basic first aid kit and are planning to take some items from it, check to make sure the flashlight batteries are working and replace supplies that have expired or been used up.



Medications:

- **Prescription medication:** Pack any prescription medication that you need to take regularly. Make sure you have enough for the duration of your stay, and slightly extra in case of delays in getting back to your country.
- **Anti-biotics:** If you can get anti-biotics without a prescription, include some in your first aid kit. Make sure that they don't require refrigeration. There are several types of anti-biotics. Consult with your doctor on this item. Anti-biotics can be purchased in Mozambique without a prescription, and are available at most Pharmacies.
- **Painkillers:** Pack some painkillers, such as aspirin or paracetamol. If you are travelling with children make sure that the medication you pack is suitable for children. (Aspirin is not suitable for children).
- **Anti-histamine:** This one is important for allergies or allergic reactions. Even people who don't have any allergies might be surprised to find that they may get an adverse or potentially life threatening reaction to an insect bite. If you are deathly allergic to bees, for example, be sure to carry injectable medication, such as an EpiPen. People who are allergic to shellfish need to have an antihistamine medication handy. Consult your doctor if you need more information. Also check [Other Warnings](#) below.
- **Anti-nausea:** Some people are surprised to find that they get sea sick. Anti-nausea medication can help with this, and is also useful if a medical condition such as [Malaria](#) or sunstroke brings on nausea and vomiting. If you are travelling with children, ask your pharmacist for a medication that is suitable for children also.
- **Anti-diarrhea:** Some people might find that the local cuisine doesn't agree with their system. Be sure to have an anti-diarrhea medication, such as Imodium handy. Diarrhea can also be the result of unclean water, or another medical condition. (Check [Other Warnings](#) below).
- **Laxatives:** Some people find that traveling to another country sometimes causes constipation, which can be unpleasant and make you feel bloated. Pack a laxative in case and ensure you drink plenty of clean water (bottled water is best).
- **Antacid:** People who suffer from heartburn will want to keep antacid medication handy. Most pharmacies in Mozambique stock a form of this medication – though people find that different types work for them, and the ones in Mozambique might not work so well for you.
- **Cough Medicine:** Cough medications don't cure a cold, flu or fever, but they help alleviate the symptoms and make a person feel more comfortable while their body fights the infection. (Be careful not to mistake a cold or flu for [Malaria](#).)
- **Multi-Vitamins, Effervescence Tablets, Immune Boosters:** If you do get sick, having a multi-vitamin or immune booster will help your body cope better and heal quicker.
- **Glucose sweets:** Especially for people who have hypoglycemia – they help for episodes of low blood sugar levels. If you are diabetic, please make sure you have enough medication or insulin with you.



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- **Anti-Malarial Medication / Prophylaxis:** Before buying prophylaxis or antimalarial medication, please read our article on [Malaria](#). The risk of malaria should be taken seriously in Mozambique.

Tools:

- **Disposable latex gloves:** keep several pairs of disposable latex gloves in your first aid kit. These are important to protect you from the blood and body fluids of other people. (Remember that these should be used once and then properly discarded.)
- **Scissors:** To cut bandages, plasters, and other packaging. Scissors will probably come in handy at some point during your trip.
- **Thermometer:** An oral, digital thermometer is best. Definitely have a thermometer if you are travelling with children and babies.
- **Tweezers:** To remove thorns or other foreign objects from the body. Also used to remove bee stings and ticks. Tweezers usually also come in handy for other purposes.
- **Safety Pins:** For securing bandages in place.
- **Adhesive Tape:** For securing bandages in place. Duct Tape is especially good for this purpose. (Beware not to restrict blood flow when using adhesive tape, and ensure you do not stick it directly onto the skin)
- **Whistle:** Whistles are useful if you need to call for help when you are not able to move very far, or when you are far from help.
- **Flash Light / Torch:** A torch comes in handy in Mozambique especially if there is temporary power failure or if you are [walking on the beach at night](#) or just generally need to examine something outside at night. (Please see our warnings regarding [walking on the beach at night](#))
- **Matches / Lighter:** While you are at it, include a box of matches and possibly also a candle. Matches are useful if you want to start a fire for a braai or barbecue, and a candle may come in handy if you experience a temporary power failure – although most places in Mozambique are equipped with electrical generators. Beware that some airlines don't allow you to carry gas lighters on their flights.
- **A small knife:** Or a Swiss Army Knife is likely to come in handy, especially if you find that your lodge or resort does not have a wine or can opener!

Medical Supplies:

- **Plasters:** Be sure to pack plasters in a variety of sizes for cuts, scraps, abrasions and other wounds. Have these handy if you are travelling with children.



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- **Sterile gauze dressings:** To treat bigger wounds, especially where there is a risk of infection.
 - **Triangular Bandages:** It can be used fully unrolled as a sling, folded as a normal bandage, or for specialized applications, such as on the head.
 - **Roll of Bandage:** Bandages may be used to stop the flow of blood, to provide a safeguard against contamination, or to hold a sterile gauze dressing in place.
 - **Hand sanitizer or wet wipes:** Use these to clean your hands or sterilize tweezers, thermometers, or scissors etc.
 - **Distilled Water:** Keep a small bottle of distilled water for cleaning wounds. (Saline solution can be used for wound cleaning and eye irrigation. You can mix the solution yourself, as and when it is required. (A cup of clean water with about ¼ teaspoon of salt added).
 - **Eye / Ear Drops:** Usually eye drops double as ear drops. Ask your pharmacist about this. They're especially useful if the eye becomes irritated, hurt or dry. Ear drops help with ear infections. Some people find that they are prone to ear infections after swimming in pools or the sea. While you are at it, also include lip ice or lip balm for dry lips. Eyes can be irrigated using the above mentioned saline solution. A useful tip for sore, red eyes from pool Chlorine is to infuse a Rooibos (Redbush) tea bag in water, and irrigate the eyes with that. If you are prone to "Swimmers Ear" you can mix your own ear drops, which should be instilled every time you swim. 4mls water + 4mls Surgical Spirit + 2mls White vinegar (DO NOT use this solution if you have an ear infection.)
 - **Eye patch / Eye Pad:** Used to cover the eye if it becomes irritated, hurt, bloodshot, or sensitive to light.
 - **Cotton, Cotton Balls:** Can be used to clean wounds, or act as a dressing for wounds that need to be covered. You will usually also need a bandage, plaster or adhesive tape to keep them in place. Remember not to stick tape directly to the skin.
 - **Skin Rash Cream / Ointment:** Sea water contains minerals that are good for your skin, but it is also home to plants and organisms that can cause skin irritation or rashes. Keep a rash cream or ointment handy in case. "Blue bottles" are common in some of the coastlines around Mozambique. They should not alarm you, but they can cause itchiness and skin irritation. At worst, their stings are painful, but the species in Mozambique are not likely to harm you beyond this. Don't rub the stung area, but rinse it well with seawater to remove any more stinging cells. If possible, place the stung area in hot water (at a temperature you can comfortably tolerate). For stings from jellyfish tentacles, rinse with salt water; apply vinegar or a baking soda paste to the stung area. Take pain medication.
 - **Cream or spray to relieve insect bites:** Similar to the above, however this one is particularly focused on relieving painful insect bites.
 - **Antiseptic Cream / Ointment:** Used to clean wounds and usually also applied to sterile gauze or cotton when making a dressing. A common one is Betadine. You can also pack an antibiotic ointment if you want.
 - **Sunscreen:** Sunscreen (SPF 30 or above) is recommended for Mozambique. See [Other Warnings](#) below.



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- **After Sun:** After Sun lotion or cream can reduce the damaging effects of sunburn. See [Other Warnings](#) below. Aloe Vera gel is also very good for soothing sunburn.
 - **Burn shields:** To cool burns. They come in various sizes, and can be purchased in most pharmacies.
 - **Insect Repellant:** Generally used to ward off mosquitos and other insects. Please read our article on [Malaria](#), which also gives more information regarding insect repellants.
 - **Oral Rehydration Salts:** Some people struggle to stay hydrated in Mozambique because of the high temperatures. Sometimes drinking water is not enough to stay hydrated, and excessive amounts of water leech minerals and salts from your body. Add oral hydration salts to your water to replace lost minerals and salts. You can also mix your own hydration solution, see [Other Warnings](#) below.

Documentation:

- **Emergency Contact Numbers:** Compile and pack a document into your first aid kit that contains a list of emergency contact numbers. Include the phone number, email address, or other contact details for your close friends or family, your doctor and your medical aid or health insurance provider. You may also want to include the phone number and email address for your lodge, hotel or resort; your airline and/or car rental company. [Mozambique.co.mz](#) also includes a list of [Emergency Contact Numbers](#) for Mozambique. Check our article on [Medical Preparation](#) before travelling to Mozambique.
- **Medical Aid / Health Insurance Membership Card or Policy:** If your medical aid provider or health insurance provider has issued a membership card, be sure to keep this either in your first aid kit, or in your wallet or purse. Please check our article on [Medical Preparation](#) before travelling to Mozambique.
- **List of Allergies / Medical Conditions:** If you have any allergies, please get an allergy bracelet. Also compile and pack a document that lists allergies or medical conditions that you, or someone in your group may have. This information is important for medical professionals who might require it. Check our article on [Medical Preparation](#) for more information.

Other Warnings:

- Mozambique is popular for sea food. If you are allergic to shell-fish, beware of eating out. Some restaurants in Mozambique recycle oil they have used to cook sea food. Other restaurants don't have separate cutlery or crockery for non-sea food dishes. Make sure you have an anti-histamine medication handy in case you get a reaction.



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- In some places, the water might not be safe to drink. **Mozambique.co.mz** lists this information in our Accommodation Listings. Ask about the quality of the water when you get to your destination. If in doubt about the water quality, drink bottled water. Almost all resorts, lodges and hotels stock bottled water for their guests. You can also buy bottled water in bulk in almost any supermarket, small shop or vendor in Mozambique (please check that the bottle is properly sealed before opening it. If a seal is broken it may indicate the bottle was refilled, possibly with unsafe water). If bottled water is not available, you can boil your water for 5 minutes. This kills most of the harmful organisms. Beware of washing fruit and vegetables in unsafe water – especially if they are going to be eaten raw. Also beware of ice cubes for drinks. A lot of harmful organisms easily survive the freezing process.
 - A holiday to Mozambique usually includes a sun tan, however, please be aware of the damaging effects of UV rays from the “African” sun. It is highly recommended that you apply a sunscreen to all exposed areas of your body, especially while you are on a boat or on the beach. We also recommend that you avoid extended exposure to the sun. Children should wear wide brimmed sun hats for further protection against sunburn. Drink plenty of fluids (especially water) to stay hydrated. As a further precaution, add hydration salts to your water. Sun stroke is a serious condition that should be considered a medical emergency. Symptoms of sun stroke include: throbbing headache, dizziness, lack of sweating despite the heat, muscle cramps, nausea and vomiting, rapid heartbeat, rapid shallow breathing, disorientation, and possibly even a loss of consciousness. If you feel cold in warm weather you have likely suffered bad sunburn. If you have been burnt by the sun, use an “after sun” cream or lotion to reduce the damaging effects to your skin. After Sun lotion can also prevent skin from peeling if applied to sun burnt skin every two – three hours for a few days. Remember to re-apply sunscreen if you have been swimming, or as directed by the instructions on the bottle. (It usually needs to be re-applied every four hours). Please don’t mistake sun stroke for [Malaria](#).
 - If you get diarrhea and suspect that it is viral or bacterial, for example from drinking contaminated water, or transmitted by another infected person, it is NOT recommended that you take any medication to stop it, unless you are traveling. Rather ensure you keep well hydrated. Carry some oral rehydration solution sachets in your first aid kit, or mix your own solution – 750mls of clean water, 6 teaspoons of sugar and 1 teaspoon of salt. Take frequent sips. If you become very dehydrated, seek medical attention. Intravenous fluid replacement may be required, especially for children. Note that the combination of heat, diarrhea and dehydration in children can quickly become life threatening or fatal.