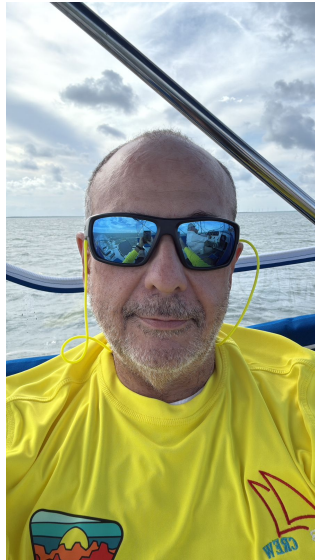




Dr. Carlos Lozano.
Regular member LMYC.

Forewarned is forearmed.
Prevention is better than cure.
Medications on board.

After reviewing the literature on the subject, I found that there is no universally recommended emergency medical kit for sailing. The type and availability of medications and supplies for onboard emergencies depend on several factors. However, it is generally accepted that being prepared with a kit of medicines and supplies for emergency care on a boat is essential.

With over 30 years of experience in surgical emergencies as a General Surgeon, I have learned that the best approach to emergencies is prevention. In other words, it's crucial to avoid them in the first place; however, we must always be ready to handle an emergency when it arises. But what does it mean to "enter and exit an emergency"? Before starting our day on the boat and taking on our responsibilities as skippers, we must consider who is on board and our sailing destination. It's wise to contemplate potential emergency scenarios and plan how to address them. Do our guests have any medical conditions? Do they take any medications? These details can significantly affect the outcome of a real emergency on board.

Safety first, safety always. A few minutes before we set sail, it's a good idea to think about and outline possible scenarios and how to resolve them, including where we would return to and possible destinations for emergency response. I found an excellent article by Carolyn

Shearlock that I would like to share with you:
<https://theboatgalley.com/how-many-first-aid-boxes>.

In the article, Shearlock outlines her recommendation for "three boxes of medicines" that should be onboard:

1. ****The "OH SHIT" box:**** We hope never to need this box, but it should contain supplies for major burns, life-threatening bleeding, strong painkillers, and materials for treating serious broken bones.
2. ****The "everyday" box:**** This box should contain items such as Band-Aids, antibiotic ointment, anti-itch cream, splinter removal needles, a thermometer, and other non-life-threatening essentials for quick access. Cold or cough medications that we're currently taking can also be stored here temporarily, though this box won't accommodate all of them permanently.
3. ****The "I'm sick" box:**** This box should include cold and flu remedies, diarrhea medications, upset stomach medications, toothache remedies, and supplies for treating sprains or breaks.

Carrying an **emergency kit** on your sailboat is critical for safety. It greatly enhances your ability to manage unforeseen medical, mechanical, or environmental issues and can prevent minor problems from escalating into life-threatening emergencies.

An emergency kit should include not only medications but also all necessary items. Here's a brief overview of what a complete emergency kit should entail:

- ****Communicate Distress:**** Essential signaling devices like flares, EPIRBs, and VHF radios are crucial for alerting rescuers.
- ****Provide First Aid:**** A comprehensive medical kit allows for immediate treatment of injuries or illnesses.
- ****Ensure Survival:**** Supplies such as food, water, and thermal blankets are vital if you become stranded or must abandon the ship.
- ****Address Mechanical Failures:**** Basic tools and spare parts can help with minor repairs, preventing more severe breakdowns.
- ****Navigate and Orient:**** Backup navigation tools are essential in case electronic systems fail.

Ultimately, an emergency kit is an indispensable aspect of responsible seamanship, offering peace of mind and significantly increasing the chances of a safe outcome during an emergency.

Greetings and a big hug to all the members of the Laguna Madre Yacht Club.

Dr. Carlos Lozano