

## **Tutorial: How to Build Your Own Reptile First Aid Kit!**



One important consideration every reptile or amphibian pet owner should have on hand, or at least should strongly consider, is a good first aid kit! Likewise, for the individual or organizations which perform reptile rescue services for the community, a good, basic reptile first aid kit is also a must to have on hand for any new, incoming, and surrendered animals. Just as with cats, dogs, and any other animals, reptiles can sometimes find themselves in need of first aid as well, whether they be from relatively minor cuts, scrapes, or abrasions, over-clipped beaks or nails, minor burns, infections, or other ailments. There are also of course other first aid components which may be needed in some cases; however, these items will by far be the most commonly used items.

Obviously, if your pet reptile or amphibian suffers a much more serious health issue or concern, it is best recommended to seek professional veterinary attention with your local reptile or exotic animal veterinarian (further resources on this are available on the “find a reptile veterinarian” section of the WHA website and the Association of Reptile and Amphibian Veterinarians (ARAV) website. However, for many, more relatively minor injuries or health issues, or to help stabilize your reptile until you can get it to a vet, a good first aid kit is still nonetheless a good tool to have on hand! In this tutorial, we will include a guide or checklist of the most essential first aid items for your reptile, so that they can all be organized into one place, even if you have all, or some of these following first aid items! Further insight and

recommendations as to where to purchase or acquire each of these first aid items can also be provided as well, if needed; however, many of these items may also be found at your local pharmacy or grocery store.



### **(1) First aid Box**

The first component needed is a good first aid box or kit to hold all of the first aid supplies. Nearly any type of empty container can work, although some which have multiple layers or compartments for increased organization (such as a tackle box) can work even better. Having a more brightly colored container can also help one more quickly locate the first aid kit in a state of emergency as well. The first-aid box should also be lockable and kept inaccessible to any kids or other pets in the household.



### **(1) Betadine Solution/Anti-Septic Topical Solution**

Good for cleaning and sterilizing minor wounds, injuries, or other topical infections. Can also be added to water for soaking.



### (1) Box of Gauze

For cleaning wounds or injuries. Gauze pads can also be pre-soaked and stored in a zip-lock bag, although this step is not required.



### (1) Bottle of Styptic Powder

Good for stopping bleeding of over-cut nails or beaks in some reptiles.



### (1) Polysporin/Neosporin

An over-the counter antibiotic ointment which can prevent or reduce infections in cuts, scrapes, or other abrasions. Best used after cleaning with gauze and the betadine solution. Likewise, Aquaphor is another topical antibiotic ointment which is more water resistant and can be used for minor skin irritations or other injuries on aquatic turtles, or some other more aquatic reptiles.



**(1) Silver Sulfadiazine Cream**

Another topical ointment or cream which can be used to clean and disinfect a wide variety of injuries in reptiles including cuts, burns, scraps, abrasions, and other injuries or infections.



**(1) or More Self-Adhering Wrap**

For stabilizing more serious injuries requiring veterinary attention or to hold gauze in place.



**Tweezers and/or Nail Clippers of Various Sizes**



**(1) Box of Q-Tips and/or Micro-Applicators**

For cleaning smaller or extracting from areas or injuries requiring more precision.



**(1) Electrolyte Soak or Unflavored Pedialyte**

\*Optional, but can be used to address severely dehydrated animals.



**(1) Eye and Ear Cleaner/Terramycin Ointment**

Good for flushing out obstructions in eyes or ears. Sterile water used in professional veterinary setting, but available as prescription only. Likewise, Terramycin is an anti-biotic eye ointment which can be used generally for addressing relatively minor eye infections in your reptile.



**(1) Preparation H Ointment**

Preparation-H is a hemorrhoidal topical ointment which can be used to deal with prolapses (professional veterinarian required) to reduce pain and swelling from this and other types of injuries.



### **(1) Chlorohexidine Solution**

May not be able to be fitted into a first aid kit, but good to have on hand for general cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces.

***\*Optional, but Recommended: 2 or 3 Business Cards or Contact Information for your most trusted reptile veterinarians in your area, as well as at least 1 24 hour emergency veterinarian.***

### **Other Items which can be Useful to Include or Have on Hand:**

- Magnifying Glass
- Disposable Gloves
- Syringes of various sizes.
- Eye dropper or other pipets
- Paper Towel
- Heat Packs and/or Cold Packs
- Small Kitchen Scale for Weighing
- Toothpicks and/or Tongue Depressors (for opening your reptile's mouth)
- Small squeeze bottle filled with water for flushing
- Many other things (to prevent this list from running too long)