


I was packing my 4WD the other day and I came across the compartment that holds my small first aid kit.

We've had the vehicle about six years and it was second hand when we bought it (2001 model), so guess that makes it thirteen years old.

The thing is, I can't remember if I checked the first aid kit when I bought it, so I opened it up. This is a basic kit that has a great little quick reference booklet produced by St John, it also has bandages of all shapes and sizes, tweezers, scissors, swabs, ointments and even rubber gloves.

We must have added some pain relief tablets and some off the shelf hay fever treatments and antihistamines. Interesting that a couple of the ointments and pills are out of date and I couldn't see dates on the bandages, so things will be replaced as required.

 *'What if I figured there's one in the back of the 4WD, so that'll do?'*

Learn some basic First Aid

Now I'm not a medical expert nor have I done a first aid course. But after checking the reference guide and using a bit of common sense, I would have been able to treat an injury fairly well until we sought professional treatment.

I should also mention that we have a newer, bigger first aid kit in our caravan that I know is up to date. This includes more up to date treatment methods.

But, what if I figured there's one in the back of the 4WD, so that'll do? Or on those rare occasions when I take a hike, I only pack a band-aid and some water. This isn't good enough, just ask any snake!

We Aussies have a "she'll be right" attitude. But a first aid kit is like insurance, you never know when and if you'll need it. So it's better to have a good one and learn some basics before you set off on a journey.

Get a check-up before you leave

I read on another blog recently that the number of grey travellers heading north is increasing. This is putting an extra strain on hospitals, medical centres and doctors. The fact is as you get older, things will go wrong, so be prepared.

Get a complete checkup before you leave. Make sure your kit is up to date and take all the medicines that have been prescribed plus any doctor's notes on existing conditions.

And ... it's probably a good idea to do a first aid course, I know I will.

This post was updated for 2017.

What else do you check regularly or add to your first aid kit?