CRISIS READY MEDIA
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FIRST AID INFOSHEET

The journalist Individual First Aid Kit (IFAK)

While on assignment, emergency medical services are often delayed or not available at all. In those moments, being able to care for yourself or a colleague is critical. Every journalist should carry an IFAK and understand how to use it.

1 What belongs in an IFAK

Carried on your body, every assignment

An IFAK provides immediate care for serious injuries when professional help is not close. It holds the tools to **control major bleeding**, **treat chest injuries** and **protect against infection**.

Item	What it is for
Tourniquet	Combat-proven, windlass style. Stops major bleeding from an arm or leg.
Hemostatic gauze	Wound packing and clotting.
Pressure bandage	Holds firm pressure on a packed or dressed wound.
Vented chest seals	Cover penetrating chest injuries.
Medical gloves	Protect you and the patient from infection.
Trauma shears	Cut away clothing and gear to reach the injury.
Marker or pen	Record tourniquet application times and vital notes.

DEPENDING ON YOUR TRAINING AND ENVIRONMENT

A nasopharyngeal airway, emergency blanket or eye shield may be added. Keep the kit compact, organized and easy to carry. Include only items you are trained and confident to apply under stress.

2 The team first aid kit

In the vehicle, support bag or with a designated team member

A larger shared kit that backs up individual gear and supports multiple injuries or a long wait for medical help.

- [ ] Multiple tourniquets and trauma dressings
- [ ] Extra hemostatic gauze and chest seals
- [ ] Splints
- [ ] Burn care supplies
- [ ] Airway adjuncts
- [ ] Irrigation fluids and eye wash
- [ ] Emergency blankets
- [ ] Extra gloves and wound care materials
- [ ] Litter for transport

The team kit is not a substitute for individual preparedness. It is a shared resource for extended coverage or multi-casualty situations.

3 Placement and familiarity

Check your kit before every assignment

- [ ] Placed where you can reach it with either hand
- [ ] Not buried in gear, sealed in plastic or locked in a vehicle
- [ ] Everyone on the team knows where each kit is stored and how to access it
- [ ] Every item is one you have trained to use

A kit you can't get to in time isn't useful.

4 Training makes it real

Carrying a kit does not make you prepared

Understanding how to use it under pressure is what makes the difference. In our Hostile Environment and First Aid Training (HEFAT) courses, journalists learn hands-on how to:

- [ ] Apply tourniquets
- [ ] Pack wounds
- [ ] Treat chest injuries
- [ ] Manage casualties until help arrives

Our approach. We don't train journalists to act as medics. We train them to care for themselves and their colleagues when emergency responders aren't close enough, fast enough or available at all. Book training at crisisreadymedia.org.

This infosheet is general guidance and does not replace hands-on training. Crisis Ready Media encourages every journalist to thoroughly test, configure and evaluate all equipment, especially first aid tools, to ensure it meets their specific needs, environment and level of training. Adapted from the Crisis Ready Report, "The Journalist Individual First Aid Kit (IFAK)," Aug. 4, 2025. November 2026.

Crisis Ready Media
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A 501(c)(3) nonprofit. EIN 93-4927139.

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