

bandana is all that is needed. However, every crew member should wash his hands with soap before preparing food or eating.)

Cleaning dishes is a necessity but hardly a high point of the day. Semi-clean cooking gear can bring a trip to a very miserable state if backpackers encounter either soap-runs or food poisoning. The work of cleaning up starts with menu planning - bring enough food so that everything is eaten down to the last scrap. It is perfectly acceptable to lick the bowl and the pot clean. Once this is done it is much easier to finish the dish washing. To wash your dishes heat up water in the larger pot. Put a little in the smaller pot with a drop or two of the soap. Finish washing the inside of the pot and then the rest of the crew gear. Stack the washed gear and rinse with hot water. Rinse the small pot and rinse everything one more time. Bring the water in the large pot to a roiling boil and carefully scald each of the clean, rinsed dishes in the boiling water. Spread on the plastic and allow to air dry.

Water Purification: It is safe to assume that every water shed in the continental United States is contaminated with viruses, bacteria, Giardia, protozoa, or tapeworm cysts. Knowing which of these you are likely to encounter will help you determine which method of water purification will be the best for your situation. There is little a back packer can do to purify water that is chemically contaminated. There are three practical types of water treatment available - chemical, filtration and purification. Chemical treatments use peroxide, chlorine or iodine to kill bacteria and some cysts. Iodine works better than chlorine in killing Giardia cysts, but neither will kill tapeworm cysts. Filtration devices prevent anything above a certain size from passing through. Filtration works well for tapeworm and Giardia cysts and several other water borne bugs. Purification uses a further reduced pore size and adds a chemical sterilizer like silver particles. Purification will remove nearly all water borne pests including most viruses, however the useful life of a purification cartridge is quite limited and is especially sensitive to particulates in the water. It is a good ideal to carry a back up method of purification for whatever method you choose as your primary (adding extra fuel to boil water before consumption is a possibility) and it is very prudent to add a disposable or cleanable, coarse filter to the inlet tube of a filter system.

Group First Aid Kit: Each hiker should be carrying a small personal first aid kit with band aids and moleskin any necessary personal medication. The group kit should be targeted toward larger problems. It is a good idea to include a large Ace bandage, gauze pads, topical antihistamines and anti-bacterials, adhesive tape, bandage scissors and latex gloves. Depending on the location and difficulty of the trek additional items might be necessary and prudent to have on hand. Make sure everyone knows what is in the kit and how to apply to a first aid emergency.

Repairs and Spares: Bring the basics to keep you going. Repairs that can effect you survival are repairs for tents, boots, and stoves. A needle with carpet thread can sew up nearly any cloth rip (tent or pack). Pins can repair zippers. Check your stove manufacturer for spares you should be carrying with you. A small metal tube 3/8" in diameter and 6" long will allow you fix most tent pole problems. For external packs make sure you have at least one of each size clevis pins and a couple of split rings. But never forget one of the critical and most useful basics - duct tape rolled on small pencil. Plan on taking about 15 feet. There are few things that cannot be fixed with a little properly applied duct tape.