

Aerospace Medical Association



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Over the past several months, I have been contacted a number of times asking what this Association's position is on airline medical kits. Based upon our experience as well as a review of the medical literature, this Association believes that an evaluation of the contents and usage of airline medical kits is necessary. In general, inflight illness, particularly serious illness, is an unusual occurrence. However, the most recent evaluation was a two-year study by the FAA Civil Aeromedical Institute almost ten years ago. This study evaluated inflight medical kit usage for medical emergencies between August 1, 1986 and July 31, 1988. The study determined that medical kits are used infrequently inflight but was unable to fully evaluate whether or not the kits contained the necessary medications and equipment. In reviewing the contents of the inflight medical kits on United States air carriers in comparison to international air carriers, the U.S. airlines' medical kits are much less well equipped than most international air carriers.

Based on our observations, the Aerospace Medical Association recommends that:

1. Airlines be required to report their medical kit usage to the FAA;
2. The use and efficacy of inflight medical kits on U.S. air carriers be evaluated for possible updating of the required kit contents;
3. Medical kit usage be reviewed every four years to determine if modifications are necessary.

I hope you find these comments constructive and useful. Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Russell B. Rayman M.D.
Russell B. Rayman, M.D.
Executive Director

cc: James M. Vanderploeg, M.D.
Jon L. Jordan, M.D.

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