

The Great Olivier Newsletter

*Vol 6:
First Aid Essentials | Eggplant Stew | Door Prizes*

The Great Olivier Newsletter volume six, the “worst part of the year, it’s dark, there’s not enough snow, uggghghh” edition. Here in Whitehorse, the sun is rising around 10:30am, it’s cold, but not cold enough to keep the snow from turning to ice, and there isn’t enough white stuff in the mountains to ski without hitting rocks. Ok, fine, I’m being a little pessimistic here, but it’s not my fault I get hit with the seasonal November-sucks.

This month’s newsletter isn’t going to change anything but will hopefully provide you with a nice break from your workday. Enjoy!

- First Aid Essentials -



Anyone who knows me knows that I’m a huge first aid nerd. Nothing gets me going like a fully stocked first aid kit, a well thought out procedure checklist, and a gaping wound full of gunk, juice and gross bits.

Out of all the things in my big first aid kit, I want to talk about the items I use all the time. These eight essentials get used on almost every trip and will always be easily accessible in my pack regardless of the activity.

Before we get going here, it’s important to note that these items are supplementary to a proper first aid kit. You won’t have all your bases covered with just these items. I also can’t emphasize enough how important training is and I highly recommend taking a wilderness first aid course. Wilderness first aid differs from your standard first aid courses and gives you the tools to deal with medical emergencies when 9-1-1 is not an option, and the problem-solving skills that will help you make better decisions when adventuring outside.



Note taking material

Bring something to take notes with. If anything goes seriously wrong, you'll want to start writing down important information to pass along to your rescuers. More realistically though, it's super handy to be able to leave paper notes around. I've left notes at trailheads about trail conditions, put notes on trees ahead of wasp nests, and exchanged contact info with other hikers. Bring along a small golf pencil and a mini rite in the rain notebook.

Hair Elastics

Does anyone in your adventure friend group have long hair? If yes, throw in 2-4 hair elastics in your kit. Trust me, one day their hair won't stop falling into their eyes and you will be their saviour when you can give them a hair elastic.



Trauma Shears

Trauma shears are extremely sharp scissors with blunt ends. These lightweight scissors will cut through anything and a small pair takes up very little space. I use these all the time when cutting tape, trimming bandages, opening packaging, and worst comes to worst cutting through clothing to get to a wound.

Forceps / Tweezers

Everyone will inevitably get a sliver stuck in their hand and it's annoying, painful and a mood killer. Paying a little extra for quality forceps is well worth it. The key piece to look for in good forceps is a fine/sharp tip.





Gauze Pads

I like having two to five 3x3” gauze pads with me. Paired with tape, you can create bandages for tons of different types of wounds. They’re also great for wiping up bloody/gross wounds. If you go to a medical supplier, you can get a box of 100 for dirt cheap (3-5\$).

Micropore Tape

Tape is great! I use it for blisters, for reinforcing bandages, and for adding padding to a high use area. There’s a ton of different tapes out there but I always bring a little roll of micropore tape (aka paper tape). Micropore tape is designed to go directly on the skin and it’s perfect for any kind of medical use. If I’m rock climbing or on a longer trip, I’ll also bring a small roll of athletic tape.



Eye Bath

Our bodies are big, strong and mighty, but useless if something gets in our eyes. Small bugs, dust, dirt, specks of randomness... when the eye gets hit, you’re going down. A mini eye bath is great for rinsing out eyeballs. They’re especially important if you’re doing a sport that pelts debris at you (like mountain biking or climbing). To use just fill with water and dunk the eye!

Pro Wrap

Pro wrap is a stretchy, porous fabric often used in physiotherapy settings. However, it’s incredible at making blister bandages. It comes in a giant roll but I just bring a little bit to make blister pads (see below). It’s cheaper and does a better job at treating blisters than moleskin or second skin specialty bandages.



HOW TO MAKE A BLISTER PAD



The best treatment for blisters is to get at it before it becomes a blister. If you start feeling some rubbing, a “hot spot”, or discomfort from friction, put a piece of micropore tape over the rubbing zone.

If you don't get to the hotspot in time, it's time to make a blister pad. The idea here is to pad the skin around the blister to prevent any more rubbing or pressure on the blister.

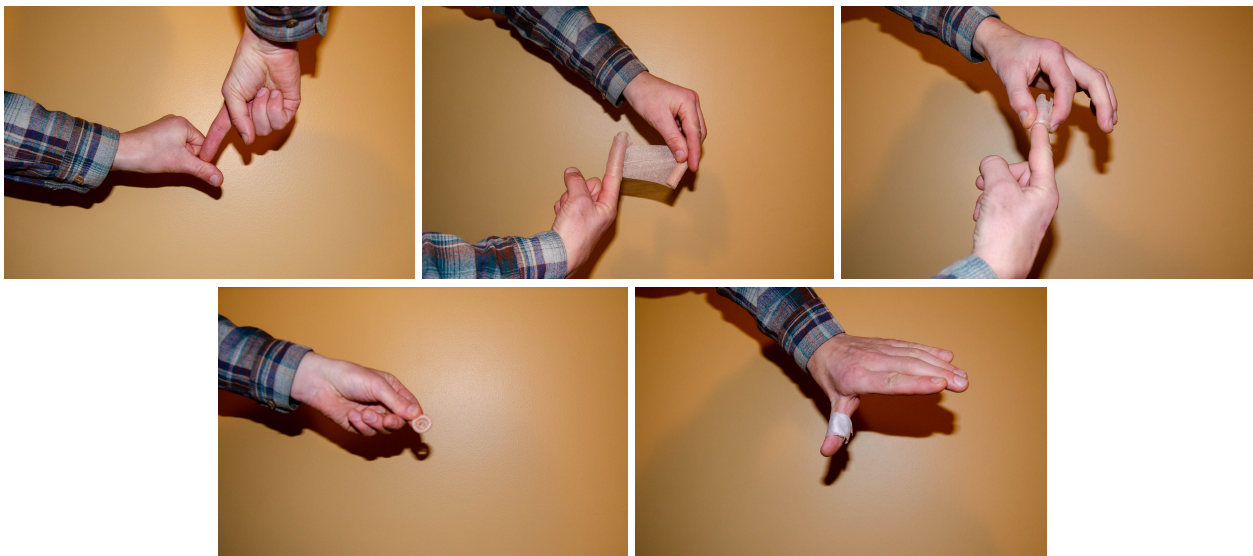
Step 1) Use your fingertip to measure the size of the blister. Your blister will either be 1, 2, or 3 fingers wide. If it's more than that, you've got a gnarly problem that might be too big to deal with in the field.

Step 2) Wrap pro wrap around the fingers you used for measuring the blister. You only need to wrap around your finger(s) 2-3 times.

Step 3) Roll the pro wrap up and off your finger. You should now have a neat little donut shape.

Step 4) Place the donut on the blister. The donut should be slightly bigger than the blister with all the elevated skin contained within the donut.

Step 5) Cover the whole thing with micropore tape.



- Mediterranean Inspired Eggplant Stew -

This is one of my favourite backcountry dishes. It's hearty, vegetarian, and delicious. This dish is great with couscous, but you can also have it with naan bread or rice instead.

Recipe and instructions by Emma Dobson.

Ingredients

- 3 Globe/American Eggplants or a similar volume of another variety
- Olive Oil
- Salt and pepper
- One medium onion, diced
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- Cumin
- Coriander
- 1 can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 large (796mL) can of diced tomatoes
- Handful of fresh mint, roughly chopped (or a sprinkle of dried)
- Handful of fresh parsley, roughly chopped
- Splash of lemon juice
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt

Cooking

1. Dice the eggplants, toss in salt, pepper and olive oil. Roast on baking sheets at 375 until they are soft and golden, about 30-40 minutes. Stir half way through.
2. While the eggplant is roasting place a splash of olive oil and the onion in a pot over medium heat. Cook until a bit of golden colour starts to appear, then add the bell pepper and cook for four more minutes. Add the garlic, a couple pinches of pepper and a generous sprinkle of cumin and coriander. Cook for one minute. Add the can of tomatoes and chickpeas. Simmer until the eggplant is finished roasting.

3. Remove the pot from the heat. Add the cooked eggplant, lemon juice, mint, parsley and yogurt. Taste and adjust the salt and spices as desired.
4. Spread on silicone mats or parchment paper on dehydrator trays and dehydrate at 140 degrees for 8-12 hours or until all ingredients are dried.
5. To rehydrate in the field add water and simmer until tender. Serve with couscous.

- DOOR PRIZES!!! (a newsletter update) -

It's been about nine months now since I started this newsletter and I wanted to take a second to thank everyone who signed up! The very first newsletter was sent to 14 people and we're now just shy of 70 subscribers (68 to be exact)!!! I'm no internet influencer with millions of followers, but it feels special to have so many people read my little monthly project.

I'm wondering though, are we able to get up to 100 subscribers? Oof, 100, that's a big number... That's 1.5 standard school buses full of adults, half the Guinness world record for most hula hoops spun at once (200 in case you were wondering), and three times more notes than I can play on my trumpet.

So here's what I propose; you keep reading and enjoying this newsletter and I'm going to try to recruit more people. When we hit 100 subscribers, I'm going to draw a few subscriber's names from a hat to win cool prizes. There's going to be some photography prints, custom made water resistant zippered pouches, and a homemade tote bag.

At my current subscription rate, it's going to take a while before we get there, but if you want a chance to win sweet door prizes before the next decade, think about plugging this old newsletter to that friend of yours who's getting into the outdoors, or that coworker who won't stop talking about his weekend hikes, or even to your local outdoor newsletter enthusiast club.

In all seriousness, I'm grateful for my small but mighty readership and I look forward to continuing with this project.