

Summit Station, Greenland

May 2010

Altitude Advice From Your Remote Services Paramedic



Don't Let Acute Mountain Sickness Affect Your Visit to Summit!

Special points of interest:

- * We are at 10,500 feet in elevation
- * Many are adversely affected by rapid ascents to our station
- * AMS can have an onset as short as 2 hours, sometimes less
- * Early recognition of illness is critical
- * Your medic can assist you rapidly
- * Many chronic medical conditions can be aggravated by AMS. Let your medic know of any medical conditions you are currently under care for

Strategies to Avoid AMS:

- * Drink plenty of water prior to visit. Often, 4-5 liters per day is needed at elevation.
- * If you are able to take such over-the-counter medications as:
 - * Motrin
 - * Aleve
 - * Tylenol
- * These are helpful in preventing the most common AMS side effect, which is headache.
- * Please to do not exert yourself aggressively during the visit. This hastens onset of AMS problems
- * Oxygen is the immediate solution to the beginnings of AMS. We have plenty! Just alert your medic.

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) can be experienced by even the most fit of individuals. A rapid ascent is usually the cause of onset. Each member may be affected differently, so we cannot predict how altitude on your visit will affect you. The key is to recognize the early signs and symptoms and let your medic assist you as needed.

You may expect some, or all of the following symptoms during this short visit:

1. Throbbing Headache (most common early sign of AMS!)
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Dizziness or lightheadedness
4. Fatigue
5. Feels like a "hangover"
6. Sensation of an inner chill unlike normal cold response
7. Shortness of breath on exertion



At any time during the visit, you begin to feel ill or "not yourself", alert your tour guide, the camp manager, or your medic of this. Early care minimizes the effects of acute mountain sickness and its possible progression to more serious conditions. Early recognition is always the



Significant Symptoms to Watch Each Other For:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A dry & non-productive cough you did not have at sea level 2. Shortness of breath at rest 3. Rapid heart rate that does not resolve at rest 4. The color of the face, lips, or nail beds is pale, or ashen color 5. Someone is not walking steadily | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Numbness in the face or hands 7. They seem to not be acting themselves |
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These are all advanced signs of the more serious aspects of AMS and require immediate medical attention. Remember, at the onset of ANY sign or symptom of AMS, alert a Summit staff member, or the camp medic.

