



Altitude Cheat Sheet

The Secret Steps to Preventing Altitude
Sickness...

You are likely here because you are concerned of the effects of Altitude Sickness.

And you probably have heard every the horror story imaginable....

Headaches and vomiting. Helicopters and hyperbaric chambers. Failed dreams and crushed egos...

It is the great unknown when embarking on a trek.

And you should be doing EVERYTHING in your power to prevent it!

The following methods shared in this document have aided dozens of our clients through treks in Nepal, Tanzania, Bhutan, India and Russia (to name a few...)

And while they will never completely eliminate the chance of Altitude Sickness, they will give you a fighting chance of succeeding in your dream adventure!

Enjoy!

And for those serious about doing everything possible to succeed, check out the last page.



1. Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Rate of ascent is the **BIGGEST** risk factor in Altitude Sickness.

Experienced alpinists will spend weeks (if not months) acclimitising before they attempt a Summit.

Obviously most of us don't have that luxury...

But check out these statistics for success ratios on Mt Kilimanjaro (5895m)...

- **5 day routes = 27% success**
- 6 day routes = 44% success
- 7 days routes = 64% success
- **8 day routes = 85% success**

Can you see what a massive difference a little bit of time can make?

Drop the ego, take it slow and give yourself plenty of acclimitisation time.

*"Climb The Mountains And Get
Their Good Tidings"*

John Muir



2. Dehydration is Enemy #1

When we are at Altitude we get dehydrated quickly.

This is for a number of reasons:

- Our respiration rate is increased --> losing more water through our breath
- Inhalation of dry air
- Exhertion and heavy clothing causes us to sweat more
- Our 'anti- diuretic' hormone is suppressed - causing us to urinate more

ALL THIS MEANS WE MUST HAVE A HYDRATION PLAN IN PLACE!

But how much do you need to drink?

Give this a go:

- 1) Plan out a 1hr walk (outside or treadmill)
- 2) Weigh yourself immediately before
- 3) Complete walk and track how much you drink
- 4) Weigh yourself after
- 5) Minus the two numbers
- 6) Minus the amount you drank
- 7) Add 50% (to compensate for Altitude)

The final number is how much you must drink EVERY hour of exercise!

*"No single mountain ever came to me...
so I always go to them"*

Eric Tange



3. *You Are What You Eat*

Your nutrition can play a MASSIVE role in both risk of Altitude Sickness and performance.

When we are at Altitude our hunger hormone Ghrelin is suppressed.

This causes us to under eat and under fuel.

Leading to early exhaustion and risk of sickness.

On top of that, the make up of your meals can make a big difference.

Studies have shown that Carbohydrate rich diets may be beneficial at high altitudes.

They can both reduce high-altitude illness symptoms and improve physical performance.

So while at Altitude you MUST:

- Actively choose carbohydrates at every meal
- Force yourself to eat regularly
- Bring plenty of energy dense, highly palatable foods to snack on (i.e. energy bars, chocolates etc)



4. *Nap Time is Precious*

Sleep Disturbance is very common at Altitude.

"Being awake half the night" and "Waking up gasping for air" are frequent complaints.

Unfortunately, sleep deprivation has quite large effects on your:

- Acclimitisation rate
- Immune Function
- Chance of Altitude Sickness
- Physical and mental performance

Some tips to help you sleep on the Mountain:

- Light Stretching
- Journalling
- Deep breathing Techniques
- Avoid late night chocolate or tea

WARNING - DO NOT USE SLEEPING PILLS OR ALCOHOL FOR THIS!

Both of these are Respiratory Depressants - meaning they slow our breathing rates down (which is not a good thing at Altitude).

If you need a sleep aid try either Magnesium or Melatonin supplements.

These are a much safer alternative.

*It's always further than it looks...
It's always taller than it looks...
And it's always harder than it looks...*



5. Get Tested!

If you are going to Altitude, it is **CRUCIAL** you get your **Iron Levels tested!**

Iron is essential for the body to produce Haemoglobin.

Haemoglobin's primary function is to transport oxygen to tissues in your body.

At Altitude your blood oxygen saturation will be naturally lowered.

A lack of Iron and Haemoglobin can have some SERIOUS consequences!

Some things to note:

- Iron Levels can take a while to raise - so don't leave it till the last minute.
- Avoid self prescribing supplements - overly high iron levels can also have some health issues - so make sure any supplementation is guided by a doctor.
- Tea and Coffee can inhibit iron absorption by HUGE amounts! Avoid these at meal times if possible.
- Vitamin C is very effective at improving iron absorption - try to include a source at every meal.

"All my life, I have never felt as happy on Earth as when I'm getting closer to the sky"

Erhard Loretan



6. Supplements

There is no 'magic pill' for Altitude Sickness.

And most of the supplements claiming to help with this are a waste of time.

Here are a two, that have been proven to work:

GINGKGO BILOBA

- Helps reduce Symptoms of Altitude Sickness
- Improves sleep quality (reduced waking during night)
- Improves oxygen uptake
- Improves blood flow

* Studies have shown the effects to be quite variable with some people being 'non responders' to these benefits at Altitude

** **DO NOT TAKE** in conjunction with medication that slows Blood Clotting. See your doctor if you are unsure.

CAFFEINE

- Safe at Altitude!
- Reduce rate of perceived effort
- Improves mood
- Stimulate ventilation (which is a good thing at Altitude!)

Also, continuing to drink your coffee while trekking can stop you mistaking an Altitude headache for Caffeine withdraws...

Because in the end, you won't remember the time you spent working in the office or mowing your lawn. Climb that goddamn mountain



The Last Step...

You now know some of the most effective strategies available at reducing the chance of Altitude Sickness.

But lets face it.

The majority of those who read this will leave it that.

By the time your trek comes around, this will be a distant memory.

And you will be just like everyone else; leaving your success up to luck...

But I do not want this to happen.

Wouldn't you rather take complete control of your chances?

Wouldn't you rather feel confident that you are doing everything right?

Wouldn't you rather guarantee your success on the mountain?

If the answer to these questions are yes, I highly recommend taking the time to read on...

"Put your heart, mind and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success."



Who we are...

Summit Strength is a personal training service that specialises in helping amateur trekkers and mountaineers prepare for their bucket list adventures.

We believe that trekkers deserve a dedicated and personalised training service and not simply another cookie cutter program.

That's why we are committed to giving our adventurer's the very best tools, advice and support they need to trek confidently and capably.

So if you would like to save yourself the disappointment of failing halfway up the mountain, we would love to help.

Here's a link to book a free discovery call.

[Click here.](#)

Here will discuss your adventure aspirations, your current preparations and determine if you have any blindspots you need to work on.

Because we truly believe that with the right training, support and advice anyone can complete a bucket list adventure.

And we are here to make that happen.

"Success is a science; if you have the conditions, you get the result"

Oscar Wilde