



From The Desk of  
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## How to Prevent Altitude Sickness

- 1. Drink plenty of water.** What you might think is altitude sickness might actually be dehydration, caused by the higher rate of water vapor lost from the lungs at higher altitudes. Avoid caffeine and alcohol, as these can increase the likelihood of dehydration. If it's humid and you're losing a lot of water through perspiration, maintain an electrolyte balance with sports drinks targeted specifically for this purpose.
- 2. Look out for the symptoms of altitude sickness.** 20% of people develop mild symptoms at altitudes between 1920 to 2960 meters (6,300 to 9,700 feet). If you know you're getting enough water, the symptoms of altitude sickness will manifest themselves about 6 to 10 hours after ascent over 2000 meters (6,500 feet) above sea level and are comparable to those of a severe hangover:
  - Loss of appetite
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Fatigue or weakness
  - Dizziness or light-headedness
  - Insomnia
  - Pins and needles
  - Shortness of breath upon exertion
  - Persistent rapid pulse
  - Drowsiness
  - Peripheral edema (swelling of hands, feet, and face)

**3. Get emergency treatment if you observe life-threatening symptoms.** Extreme altitude sickness can result in fatal conditions like high altitude pulmonary edema (HAPE) (fluid in the lungs) and high altitude cerebral edema (HACE) (swelling of the brain), both occurring in up to 2% of people adjusting to altitudes above 2700 m (9,000 feet). If any of the following symptoms are observed, medical treatment is necessary and an immediate descent should be made:

- persistent dry cough
- fever
- shortness of breath even when resting
- headache that does not respond to analgesics
- unsteady walking
- increasing vomiting
- gradual loss of consciousness

**4. Follow the "golden rule" - climb high, sleep low.** Once you've made your way up past 3,000 meters (10,000 feet), do not ascend more than 300 meters (1,000 feet) per day to sleep. You can climb as high as you want, just make sure that you come back to a base camp that's no more than 300 m (1,000') higher than your previous night's sleeping elevation. This is a useful guideline to keep in mind if you're driving to a high altitude, as well.

**5. Never look in the valley because when you are in the car you are not used to such a deep view.** If you see in the valley you can vomit once or the whole journey. I mean the more you see in the valley the more you vomit.

**6.** Taking Ginkgo biloba increases oxygen to the brain.  
(Ginkgo biloba thins the blood and may not be safe with heart of blood thinner medication, talk to your doctor before talking).

**7.** Always get a check up with your medical doctor before going up into high Altitudes, and get their ok and approval.