



Altitude Awareness

Colorado's Summit County has the home of some of the most beautiful mountains in the country, and we hope you enjoy your visit. However, some of the features, which make Summit County so attractive, can also create some difficulties. The average altitude is over 9,000 feet. You will probably notice that your breathing is faster or deeper, you have an increased heart rate, and you may feel short of breath, especially when being active. This is the body's first and most effective response to altitude. Being in good physical condition has no bearing on one's ability to acclimate. 20-30% of all visitors will experience some altitude illness symptoms. Ultraviolet rays from the sun are also stronger. No matter how tan, you should use a sun block with a minimum SPF rating of 15. Sunburn of the eyes is also a real danger. Wear sunglasses with UV protection, even on cloudy or overcast days.

Symptoms of Altitude Sickness

Headache, nausea, poor appetite, run down feeling, shortness of breath – Altitude sickness feels very much like a hangover or the flu. The recommendation for mild Altitude sickness is Tylenol or ibuprofen for the headache and Dramamine or Emetrol for the nausea. Also drink LOTS OF WATER. These symptoms should go away in a day or two. Wet cough; disoriented “leave me alone” feeling; too weak to eat or get up; fingernails and/or lips blue in color; shortness of breath at rest; balance and/or coordination problems are all very bad symptoms. If you encounter these you should see a doctor as soon as possible!

How to Improve and/or Avoid Altitude Sickness

Increase fluid intake, DRINK 8 -10 GLASSES OF WATER A DAY. Water and juices are better than coffee or tea. Decrease salt intake. Increase carbohydrate intake, such as pancakes, pasta or rice. Decrease protein intake, such as steak and eggs. Reduce alcohol and caffeine intake. Note: one drink does the work of two. Avoid tranquilizer pills or sleeping aids, they slow your breathing. And if you know you have a history of Altitude sickness, do not fret! There is a prescription drug out there called Diamox which prevents Altitude illness and speeds up the acclimation process. It is given 24 hours prior to departure and for 2 days after arrival. Ask your physician.

Colorado Weather

Summit County's 40 degree latitude gives pleasant average maximum temperatures throughout the year. Combined with the low humidity, even the most extreme temperatures don't seem quite as cold. The average daytime temperature in Keystone is about 60 in May, 70 in June, July 75, August 73, September 67 and October 57. The temperature generally drops about 20 degrees at night. It is the mountains, so always be prepared!