**Altitude and your Health**

Although Crested Butte is a beautiful and fun place to visit at any time of the year, its high elevation leaves many visitors feeling less than 100% during their visit.

Recognizing symptoms of altitude illness can help you better enjoy your vacation as well as avoid a dangerous situation.

**What is the cause of altitude illness?**
Going too quickly from a low elevation to a high elevation does not allow the body to acclimate. It is easy to get from sea level to this altitude in less than a day. Any age or fitness level is at risk for developing symptoms.

**What are risk factors for altitude illness?**
- Previous history of altitude illness
- Alcohol consumption / dehydration
- Rapid ascent
- Underlying medical problems, primarily problems with breathing
- Sleeping at high altitudes
- Previous respiratory illness

**What is Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)?**
This is the most mild form of altitude illness, but nonetheless is common and can leave travelers feeling quite uncomfortable. This usually develops within the first 24 hours at altitude.

**What are the symptoms of AMS?**
- Headache
- Nausea / sometimes vomiting
- Fatigue, loss of appetite
- Lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Frequently waking at night

**How can I prevent AMS?**
- Ascend to altitude more slowly.
- Do not over exert yourself the first day here.
- Drink lots of water.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Avoid sleeping pills.
- Diamox is a prescription that can help.
- Eat a carbohydrate rich diet.

**How is AMS treated?**
If symptoms are mild:
- Rest,
- Hydration, and
- Avoiding going to higher elevations.

For more severe symptoms:
- All of the above.
- Ibuprofen or Tylenol for headache.
- Nausea may require a prescription for anti-nausea medication.
- Diamox to speed acclimatization.
- Oxygen is sometimes indicated, particularly at night.
- Going to a lower elevation can also help.

**When should I see a physician?**
If symptoms are more than just mild it is probably a good idea to see a physician.

**What is HAPE?**
HAPE is High Altitude Pulmonary Edema which is a condition where the lungs begin to fill with fluid. This is a more severe version of altitude illness and requires medical attention.

**HAPE symptoms?**
- Cough
- Significant shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing while lying flat
- Cough pink, frothy sputum

**We are glad you are here!**
Don’t let the altitude illness ruin your vacation. By understanding some of the signs and symptoms you will be in a better position to care for yourself and know when it is appropriate to seek care at a medical facility.

Sincerely,

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Town Clinic of Crested Butte, PLLC

Town Clinic of Crested Butte is a medical clinic located in the town of Crested Butte. We provide a large variety of services including:

- Urgent care
- Walk-ins
- Primary care
- Pediatric care
- Workers’ Compensation care
- Sports injuries
- Chronic medical conditions

Our office is located at the corner of 6th and Maroon. We are 1 block north of the Visitor’s Center in town. Our office hours are:

Sun: 1-9 pm
Mon: 1-9 pm
Tues: Closed
Wed: Closed
Thurs: 1-9 pm
Fri: 1-9 pm
Sat: 1-9 pm

Check out our website for more information and to schedule an appointment:

www.towncliniccb.com

Are you experiencing:

- HEADACHE?
- FATIGUE?
- NAUSEA?
- LIGHTHEADEDNESS?
- TROUBLE SLEEPING?

If so, you may be suffering from Altitude Illness.

Look inside to find out more.