

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,

Town Clinic of Crested Butte, PLLC
214 6th St., Suite 1
Crested Butte, CO 81224
www.towncliniccb.com
970.349.6749

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:

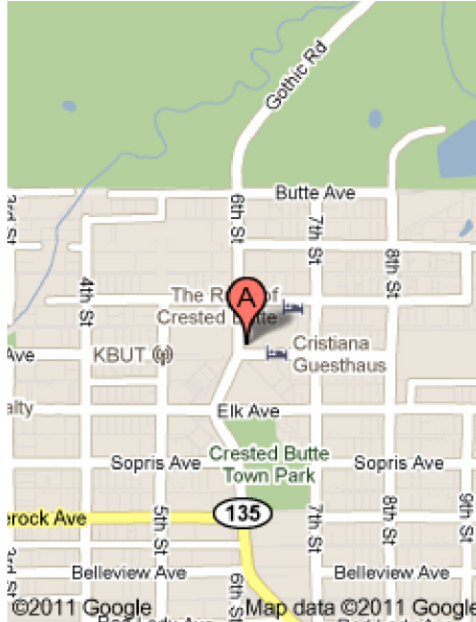
- ✓ Urgent care
- ✓ Walk-ins
- ✓ Primary care
- ✓ Pediatric care
- ✓ Workers' Compensation care
- ✓ Sports injuries
- ✓ Chronic medical conditions

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

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

www.towncliniccb.com

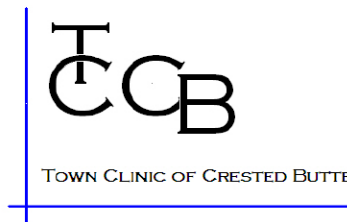


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214 6TH ST., SUITE 1
CRESTED BUTTE, CO 81224

970.349.6749

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Are you experiencing:

- ✓ HEADACHE?
- ✓ FATIGUE?
- ✓ NAUSEA?
- ✓ LIGHtheadNESS?
- ✓ TROUBLE SLEEPING?

If so, you may be suffering from Altitude Illness.

Look inside to find out more.

