

Headaches

General headache care

- Lie down and rest until you feel better. It is important to get enough sleep.
- If you are hungry, eat some food or drink fruit juice.
- Take ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as directed (check for allergies) as soon as the headache begins.
- Put a cool, wet washcloth on your forehead.

Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge if:

- The pain is severe and persists more than 2 hours after you take pain medication.
- You have difficulty with vision, thinking, speech, or walking.
- Your neck is stiff.
- You are feeling very sick.

Diarrhea

How long will it last?

Diarrhea from a viral infection usually lasts from several days to 2 weeks, regardless of the type of treatment. The main goal of therapy is to prevent dehydration by making sure you drink enough fluids to replace the fluids lost in the diarrhea.

Don't expect a quick return to solid bowel movements.

- **Diet** – Eat a regular diet with a few simple changes:
 - Eat more foods containing starch since these are easily digested during diarrhea. Examples are cereals, breads, crackers, rice, bananas, mashed potatoes, apples and noodles.
 - Drink more water or diluted sports drinks.
 - Avoid fruit juices because they may make diarrhea worse.
 - Eat or drink less milk and milk products (except active-culture yogurt) for a few days.

- Avoid beans or any other foods that cause loose bowel movements.

You can go back to your normal diet 1 day after the diarrhea is gone, which is usually in 3 to 4 days.

- **Common mistakes** – The most dangerous myth is that the intestine should be “put to rest”; avoiding fluids can cause dehydration. **There is no effective, safe drug for diarrhea.** Extra fluids and diet therapy work best.
- **Prevention** – Diarrhea is very contagious. Always wash your hands after using the toilet. This is crucial for keeping others from getting diarrhea.
- **Vomiting with diarrhea** – If you vomit more than twice, treatment of the vomiting should take priority over the treatment of diarrhea until you have gone 8 hours without vomiting. (See vomiting information.)
- **When should I contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge?**
 - You have signs of dehydration (no urine in more than 6 hours, dry mouth, no tears).
 - Any blood appears in the diarrhea.
 - Your diarrhea is severe (more than 8 BMs in the last 8 hours).
 - The diarrhea is watery AND you have also vomited repeatedly.

Vomiting

- **Drink clear fluids in small amounts for 8 hours (do not eat any solid food)**

Drink only clear fluids (not milk) in small amounts until 8 hours have passed without vomiting. Water seems to work best. Another option is half-strength sports drink.

Start with 1 tablespoon of the clear fluid every 5 minutes. After 4 hours without vomiting, double the amount each hour. If you vomit using this treatment, rest your stomach completely for 1 hour and then start over. This one-swallow-at-a-time approach rarely fails.

- **Eat plain foods after 8 hours without vomiting.** After 8 hours without vomiting, you gradually return to a normal diet. Start with such foods as saltine crackers, honey on white bread, bland soups like “chicken with stars”, rice, and mashed potatoes. Usually you can be back on a normal diet within 24 hours after recovery from vomiting.
- **Medicines.** Avoid taking any medicines by mouth for 8 hours. Oral medicines, including vitamins, can irritate the stomach and make vomiting worse. Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge to determine if you need to continue taking a prescription medicine.
- **Common mistakes in the treatment of vomiting.** A common error is to drink a full glass of clear fluid rather than gradual increasing the amount. This almost always leads to continued vomiting.

There is no effective drug or suppository for vomiting. Diet therapy is the answer. Vomiting alone rarely causes dehydration unless you take drugs by mouth, milk or too much clear fluid.

Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge if:

- You have any signs of dehydration (such as no urine in over 6 hours or a very dry mouth.)
- You vomit up blood.
- If you are a diabetic.
- If you have severe, persistent abdominal pain.
- You get confused or are difficult to awaken.

Altitude Sickness — What is altitude sickness?

Altitude sickness is also called acute mountain sickness. It is a problem that can occur if you travel to a high altitude (usually over 8000 feet above sea level). When you travel from a low elevation or sea level to a high altitude your body needs time to get

used to the altitude. Many people travel to Philmont (6,000 to 12,400 ft.) and begin doing activities (such as hiking) before their bodies have had time to adjust.

Symptoms of altitude sickness appear about 6 to 8 hours after arriving at a higher altitude. Symptoms may include:

- Headache, tiredness, dizziness, nausea, loss of appetite
- Shortness of breath and rapid heartbeat on exertion
- Insomnia or restless sleep.

Symptoms occur in about half of the people who suddenly go from seal level to 10,000 feet above sea level without giving their bodies a chance to get used to the altitude. The chance of having symptoms increases at the altitude gets higher.

How long will it last? Most people with altitude sickness feel normal in 2 or 3 days. In severe cases, when someone has made a sudden climb to over 10,000 ft. and has overexerted himself, there can be life-threatening complications. These complications include pulmonary edema (fluid in the lungs) or cerebral edema (swelling of the brain.)

How is it treated?

- **Rest for mild symptoms** – Symptoms usually go away after 2 or 3 days of fluids, a light diet and a reduction in activities. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) can be given as directed for the headache. (Check for allergies) Hiking (such as side hikes or extra hiking) or any other type of exercise should be reduced. Once you feel healthy again, you can gradually return to activities and higher elevation.
- **How can altitude sickness be prevented?** Take it easy on the day of arrival. Some exercise (like short walks) is important, but take rest breaks. Gradually increase the amount of exercise during the second and third days.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Lighten the load in your pack.

Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge if:

- The person becomes confused.
- Breathing becomes labored.
- A headache becomes severe.

Bone, Muscle, or Joint Injury or Fractures

Fractures. A fracture is a broken bone and needs to be treated by a doctor. If you think someone has a broken bone, follow the first aid instructions below:

First Aid

- Shoulder or arm: Use a sling made of a triangular piece of cloth. Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge as soon as possible.
- Leg: Use padded boards, pillows, etc. To splint the fracture. Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont health Lodge as soon as possible.
- Neck: Protect the neck from any turning or bending. Do not move the individual until a neck brace or spine board has been applied. Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge as soon as possible.

Sprains. Sprains are stretches or tears of ligaments (bands of tissue that connect one bone to another). They are caused by sudden twisting injuries. Knees and ankles are often sprained.

First Aid

- Immediately wrap the injured area with an elastic bandage and put ice on the injury to reduce bleeding, swelling, and pain.
- Most individuals will be able to hike on with some discomfort.
- Treat most injuries with R.I.C.E. (rest, ice, compression, and elevation) for the first 24 to 48 hours.
- Apply compression with a snug, elastic bandage for 48 hours. Numbness, tingling,

or increased pain means the bandage is too tight.

- Apply ice or cold water in a plastic bag to the area for 20 minutes. Repeat every hour for 4 hours.
- Give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) as directed for pain. Continue for at least 48 hours. Check for allergies before administering medication.
- Keep injured ankle or knee elevated.
- Continue to wear the correct hiking shoe.
- Lighten the load in your pack, use hiking sticks or buddy-assist.

Strains. Strains are stretches, pulls, or tears of muscles. They are usually caused by overexertion (for example, when several muscles hurt after a strenuous practice, athletic game, or long hike.) Most muscle injuries can be cared for on the trail.

First Aid

- Put an ice bag or cold pack on the area for 20 minutes. Repeat this 3 to 4 times the first day.
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen for at least 48 hours. (Check for allergies.)
- If stiffness continues after 48 hours, apply heat for 10 minutes 3 times a day until it improves.
- Lighten the load in your pack, use hiking sticks or buddy-assist.

Stretching exercises are important and will allow you to return to activities gradually. The muscle may hurt for 7 days or more.

Contact a Backcountry Staff Camp and/or the Philmont Health Lodge for a bone, muscle or joint injury if:

- The bone is deformed or crooked.
- Unable to bear weight without severe pain.
- Unable to proceed on the trail.

Sending a Message for Help

Specific information must be provided to Logistics and The Philmont Health Lodge when reporting an emergency. Stay calm and know the emergency procedures. It is important that each participant write on the back of their maps the answers to the following list of questions before going for help at the nearest staffed camp.

- Subject's name
- Expedition number
- Exact location – mark the location with an X on the map and describe in detail – use grid coordinates as best as possible
- Exactly what happened
- What is wrong – describe all symptoms and conditions in detail; subject's temperature, breathing rate and pulse are most important.
- Level of consciousness – alert (x 4; name, time, place, incident), verbally responsive, pain responsive only, unresponsive.
- History of present illness, allergies, medications, previous illness, last meal and drink, events before illness
- Pain: provokes, quality, radiation
 - Location of pain and whether pain has spread
 - Severity on a scale of 1 to 10, time and intervals of time
- Treatment so far:
- Anything else that may seem important

Cell Phone Use at Philmont Scout Ranch

Cell phones are permitted in the Backcountry. They are not encouraged. Many areas of Philmont have no cell coverage. There is no opportunity to recharge a cell phone once you have left Base Camp.

If a cell phone is used for an emergency, please use the following process:

- Phone Philmont Scout Ranch: 575-376-2281 to report an emergency. State that this is an emergency call and you need to speak with Logistics.
- Give Expedition Number
- State who is calling and the cell # - If the phone has an indicator of battery life, please state how much battery time you have, you may be directed to turn off your phone and call back at a specific time in order to save the remaining battery live
- Please remain in your current location until emergency response is activated
- Briefly describe the emergency situation – twenty-five words or less
- Accurately state the location of the emergency – please be prepared with grid coordinates.
- Be prepared with all other emergency information requested in the above list: "Sending a Message for Help".

If you receive an emergency cell phone call while at Philmont, please contact Logistics at 575-376-2281 to initiate support from the Chaplains.

**Philmont Health Lodge
Philmont Scout Ranch
17 Deer Run Road
Cimarron, NM 87714**

575-376-2281