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TRIP DETAILS

15 days ~ Tibet

6 days strenuous biking on rough, steep trails at high elevation (maximum 17,700')

Some long drives on rough roads

*7 nights camping,
7 nights hotels*

2009 DATES

May 9–May 23

Sep 5–Sep 19

2009 LAND COST

*\$5,095 per person
(10-15 members)*

*\$5,795 per person
(6-9 members)*

*\$540 internal airfare
(Chengdu/Lhasa/Chengdu)*

\$650 single supplement

THROUGH TIBET TO EVEREST

Overland Through Tibet and a Trek to Everest

TRIP LEVEL
ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

HIGHLIGHTS

- *Trek to the foot of Everest in the footsteps of early British mountaineers*
- *View the stupendous north face of Everest and enjoy a sweeping vista of vast snow-clad peaks*
- *Experience the grandeur of the Tibetan plateau—its cultural highlights, holy shrines, and arid beauty*



THROUGH TIBET TO EVEREST

Overland Through Tibet and a Trek to Everest

Some of the most heart-stopping views of Mount Everest are from Tibet, where the northern flanks of the great massif are unhindered by adjacent peaks or ridges, presenting a breathtaking 13,000 vertical feet of sheer ice and granite. This was the approach used by British mountaineers seeking a way to Everest in the 1920s, and the astonishment they felt upon seeing the great mountain will be equaled, if not surpassed, by your own. J. B. L. Noel wrote in *Through Tibet to Everest*, “We stood at 16,000 feet above the sea. The valley, a mile wide, ran straight ahead for nearly twenty miles. At its farther end, stretching across, closing the valley, rearing its imposing head of granite and ice, was Everest. Some colossal architect, who built with peaks and valleys, seemed here to have wrought a dramatic prodigy—a hall of grandeur that led to the mountain.”

Follow in their footsteps on this classic trek (one of our old favorites!), a rare chance to get a close look at the world’s highest peak as well as a stunning assemblage of other chart-topping mountains. Our trek takes you toward the great north face of Everest, where you’ll enjoy a closer look at the world’s highest peak and explore the icy wilds above our camp, a great place for photographing mountains, especially Everest, just overhead.

And the trip includes even more: an overland journey across the plains and passes of mysterious Tibet (one of the greatest journeys in all Asia), visits to ancient monasteries suspended in time, and forays to base camps used by climbing expeditions since early the last century.



ITINERARY

DAY 1 ~ Arrive in Chengdu

Arrive in Chengdu, China. A Mountain Travel Sobek representative will meet you outside the customs and immigration area at the airport. He or she will answer questions, brief you on the immediate arrangements, and escort you to your hotel. Most flights from the U.S. require two days of travel (you arrive in Chengdu on the late evening of the second day). More specific details will be sent to you in your pre-trip packet of information.

Kempinski Hotel

Note—The flight from Chengdu to Lhasa is usually scheduled to depart early in the morning. Therefore, we recommend you arrive in Chengdu a day earlier to allow for additional rest time and any flight delays. We'd be happy to make additional hotel reservations if requested. Additional costs will be reflected on your invoice. There are many sites you can explore on your own, including the nearby Panda Breeding and Research Center.

DAY 2 ~ Lhasa

Transfer to the airport and fly to the Gongkar airport, located about 45 miles from Lhasa. Drive about one hour to Lhasa (11,800') and transfer to hotel.

B,L,D...Kyichu or Dekang Hotel

DAYS 3-4 ~ Lhasa

We will have two full days in Lhasa to make excursions to the following places:

The Jokhang—The Jokhang is the principal and holiest Buddhist temple in Lhasa, as well as all of Tibet. It is the focus of devotion of hundreds of Tibetans from near and far who circle it to gain spiritual merit. The Jokhang was first constructed in the 7th century and has a large gold image of Sakyamuni Buddha.

Norbulingka—The Norbulingka, a richly decorated complex located in a beautiful garden setting, is the traditional summer palace of the Dalai Lamas. It's from here that the Dalai Lama fled to exile in 1959. (This is also where Heinrich Harrer, author of *Seven Years in Tibet*, became a tutor to the Dalai Lama.)

Sera and Drepung—Sera, founded in 1419, is a monastery of the Gelugpa order. Its many white buildings sit at the base of a rocky hill. Gilded, bell-shaped *gyamtschens* grace the roofs of many of the larger buildings. Drepung used to have 8,000 monks who were taught in the traditions of Vajrayana, Mahayana, and Sutrayana, the three vehicles of Tibetan Buddhism.

Potala Palace—The 13-story Potala Palace is reputed to contain 1,000 rooms and hundreds upon hundreds of brilliant *thangkas* (religious scroll paintings), frescoes, and images built in an era when religious art was created anonymously as a means of gaining merit for future lives. It's one of the world's most extraordinary buildings and completely covers the mountain it stands upon. When remarkable late 19th- and early 20th-century explorer Alexandra David-Neel saw the Potala, she remarked, "...even the best photograph will fail to convey a true idea of its imposing appearance, as it stands, a red palace capped with gold roofs, uplifted high in the blue sky, on a shining pedestal of dazzling white buildings."

We will also visit the Barkor bazaar in Lhasa, a colorful congregating place for Tibetan merchants.

B,L,D each day...Kyichu or Dekang Hotel

DAY 5 ~ Shigatse

Six-hour drive to Shigatse (12,792'), Tibet's second largest city, with an optional visit to Shalu Monastery along the way. Shalu was one of the rare religious sites to escape complete destruction during the Cultural Revolution and contains beautiful mural wall paintings in fragile condition.

B,L,D ...Shigatse or Mansarovar Hotel

DAYS 6-7 ~ Tingri

In the morning, we visit Tashilumpo Monastery, founded by the first Dalai Lama and situated at the base of a hill on the edge of town. Tashilumpo is the seat of the Panchen Lama, who is regarded as the reincarnation of the Buddha of endless enlightenment, and dates back to the 15th century. One of the most important religious centers of Central Tibet, Tashilumpo contains a 26-meter-tall image of Buddha, Asia's largest bronze Buddha, as well as other important art works that include *thankas* (religious scroll paintings), frescoes, and statues; pilgrims from the far corners of Tibet come to pay their homage. We may be summoned into the prayer hall by a blast from a conch shell, and see hundreds of monks chanting to the haunting music of drums and three-foot-long trumpets. At the bustling market at the foot of the ruins of the Shigatse fortress, we can bargain for local handicrafts embedded with coral and turquoise, Tibetan daggers, Chinese porcelain, and yak butter.

Early afternoon drive (five-hour) drive to Tingri at 14,000 feet. We cross the high passes of Tso La (14,800') and Gyatso La (17,125'), seemingly incongruously named (Gyatso means "ocean"), which has yielded many marine fossils to casual collectors. We'll have splendid views of Everest, Gyachung Kang, Cho Oyu and the Nangpa La pass from Tingri. Meet your Sherpa crew from Nepal and overnight in camp. We'll do a day hike on Day 7 for acclimatization.

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 8 ~ Begin trekking

We begin our trek today on a generally flat trail (a great assist to acclimatization). First we'll pass Ra Chu village with fields full of activity, then continue south with Cho Oyu on the horizon. As we continue, we see Choulung village with the ruins of its *gompas* scattered along a ridge crest. In a little while, we enter Lungzhang village (14,600') the last settlement in this part of the Tingri plain. After the village the trail forks and we take the right fork with the diminishing view of Cho Oyu to the south. We pass some *dzong* (fortress-monastery) ruins on the left and hike through a gorge-like valley before climbing to a ridge summit with panoramic views of the Himalayan peaks. Then we descend on an unusually straight section to camp at Chubre (15,200'). (7-8 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 9 ~ Takale (16,200')

From camp we begin climbing into the hills again and pass some *drokpa* (nomad) camps and stone corrals. Cho Oyu begins to loom closer again but soon disappears behind some foothills. Shell fossil remnants from the ancient Tethys Sea can be seen along the tracks. As we pass more stone corrals and some meadows, the trail veers eastward and climbs a ridge before descending to camp. (5-6 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 10 ~ Rongbuk Monastery (16,150')

We start climbing over wet tundra and grassy hummocks, and later on a stony desert valley floor, to cross Lama La pass (16,600') marked by a cairn (most of the way there are no proper trails). From the pass the trail descends steeply at first and then continues to turn east to cross the bridge over the Dzakar Chu, the main drainage of the Rongphu River and one of the Phung Chu's tributaries, to meet the motor road that goes up to Rongbuk and

Everest base camp. Our vehicles will be waiting here and we drive about 15 minutes up the valley to Rongbuk monastery with Mount Everest as its backdrop—a phenomenal sight. Rongbuk, the highest monastery in the world and a shrine dedicated to Everest, is the last sign of habitation before commencing the trek to Everest via the north face. Writes Noel, “Our party, a handful of white men and a band of Tibetan and Nepalese carriers, advanced into this secret place with feelings of awe... We Western men who had entered this strange land were pilgrims, but, unlike the pilgrims who came measuring their length on the ground, we were pilgrims only of adventure... Our business was to fight the mountain, not to worship it.” Please note Nawang Tenzing Norbu, the fifth incarnation of Lama Sangwa Dorje of the Nyingmapa sect of Buddhism, founded the Rongbuk monastery and also helped found Tengboche and other monasteries in the Khumbu region of Nepal. (6-7 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 11 ~ Everest Base Camp (16,799')

The three to four-hour walk up to the base camp area is full of interest with more buildings, caves, and ruins to explore. As we walk up the stony glacier moraine, the majestic bulk of Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world with all its features and historical mountaineering memories, fills up the head of the valley. (3-4 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 12 ~ Everest Base Camp

We will spend the day exploring the base camp. We may take a hike up the East Rongbuk glacier to Camp I at 17,700 feet. Return to camp. (6-7 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAYS 13-14 ~ To Lhasa

Drive to Lhasa via Tingri and Shigatse.

B,L,D each day...Hotel

DAY 15 ~ Depart for home

Early morning departure (1½ hours) for the airport and fly to Chengdu, China. Connect with homeward-bound flight (your departing flight from Chengdu should be scheduled for after 3:00 p.m.). Note—Most homeward-bound flights will require an overnight either in Beijing, Bangkok, or Hong Kong.

B...

EXTEND YOUR ADVENTURE!

If you like to explore on your own, plan to arrive a day or two early or extend your trip after the tour. We also offer a 5-day extension in Beijing. See pages 7-8 for details.

2009 LAND COST

\$5,095 per person (10-15 members)

\$5,795 per person (6-9 members)

\$540 airfare (Chengdu/Lhasa/Chengdu—Mountain Travel Sobek will book and issue these tickets for you)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Single Supplement—\$650 for “requested” singles; \$325 for “forced” singles. If you prefer single accommodations, you must pay the Single Supplement Fee. If you’re traveling alone and wish to share accommodations, we’ll try our best to find you a roommate. If that’s not possible, we will only charge you half of the single supplement.

Tier Pricing

Adventure travel is at its best with a small group of people. In order to operate these small groups, our trips are priced according to group size. We initially invoice for the highest tier price (smallest group size). When final group size is determined 60 days before departure, we will issue a refund if the larger group size has been achieved. All pricing is based on the number of full revenue tour members. Mountain Travel Sobek staff, trip doctors or guests are not included.

What’s Included

- ◆ expert leadership
- ◆ accommodations
- ◆ meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- ◆ tent accommodations and all trek arrangements, including cook staff, community camping equipment
- ◆ roundtrip flight between Chengdu and Lhasa (see separate cost above)
- ◆ airport transfers
- ◆ sightseeing as noted in the itinerary
- ◆ ground transportation
- ◆ additional guides where necessary
- ◆ entrance fees and permits
- ◆ basic medical and evacuation insurance

What’s Not

International airfare; meals not noted on itinerary; insurance other than basic medical and evacuation insurance noted above (we strongly recommend you purchase the supplementary trip insurance offered by Mountain Travel Sobek, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, guides and local staff; visas; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; cost of medical immunizations; items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

Air Travel

Airfare is not included in the land cost of our trips. For air reservations, we recommend you contact the airlines directly, either by phone or the Internet. In addition, many travelers elect to use their “frequent flyer” miles when traveling with us. **But please check with our staff before purchasing or obtaining your tickets.** We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip.

EXTEND YOUR ADVENTURE!

Beijing: The Heart of China – Pre- or Post-Trip Extension

No trip to China would be complete without an extended visit to Beijing, its teeming capital city. Even when it was hidden from the eyes of the world, Beijing was one of the greatest cities on earth. We'll see the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, as well as new marvels like the "Bird's Nest" Olympic stadium. Now Beijing is open to all, and this extension takes you right into the heart of China's crowning achievements.

DAY 1 ~ Arrive in Beijing

You will be met by one of our representatives outside the customs and immigration area at the airport. This person will answer questions, brief you on the immediate arrangements, and escort you to your hotel.

Wang Fujing Hotel

DAY 2 ~ Beijing

We'll visit the Forbidden City, imperial capital for the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, the Summer Palace, and Lama Temple. This evening we will have a Peking Duck dinner.

B,D... Wang Fujing Hotel

DAY 3 ~ Beijing

Today we'll head into the countryside to wander the less-visited Mu Tien Yu section of the Great Wall and the Ming Tombs, built during the emperors' lifetimes to be their underground palaces in the afterworld.

B... Wang Fujing Hotel

DAY 4 ~ Beijing

We'll continue our visit at Tian An Men Square, one of the world's largest, surrounded by the People's Hall, the Gate of Heavenly Peace, where Mao declared independence in 1949, and his mausoleum. In the afternoon, we'll visit the Temple of Heaven, noted for its architectural beauty and glimpse into the recreation time of Beijing-ites, and Liu Li Chang Street. This evening we will visit the Peking Opera.

B... Wang Fujing Hotel

DAY 5 ~ Depart Beijing

Morning free to rest or explore on your own. If you are doing a pre-trip extension, you will fly to Chengdu in the morning. If you are doing a post-trip extension, you will be transferred to the airport for departure on homeward-bound flights.

B...

Beijing Extension: 2009 Land Cost

Rates valid through August 2009

\$1,095 per person (2 or more members)

\$1,595 per person (1 member)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Single Supplement—\$290 for "requested" and "forced" singles.

THROUGH TIBET TO EVEREST

Land Cost includes accommodations, all breakfasts, Peking Duck dinner, airport transfers, baggage portage, ground transportation, services of a local English-speaking guide, sightseeing as noted in the itinerary, basic medical and evacuation insurance.

Not included are international airfare, lunches and dinners, optional tipping to guide and driver, airport taxes (if any), beverages not included with meals, laundry charges, items of a personal nature, and insurance other than that noted above.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Expert Leadership



Sanjeev Chhetri is a graduate of Delhi University, India, and has been leading treks in Nepal since 1990. He is an avid bird-watcher and very well traveled, with time spent in India, Tibet, China, England, Ireland, France, and Switzerland. Sanjeev is very knowledgeable of the cultures, religions, and traditions of this part of the world and enjoys sharing his experiences with you.

Activity Level

Mountain Travel Sobek trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active and have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. On this trip, you will be hiking five to eight hours a day, up and down mountain trails that are steep and rocky, and at elevations above 12,000 feet. Exercise at high altitude compounds the physiologic stress. You need to be in excellent health and top physical condition to enjoy such an experience, with adequate cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and excellent balance. In addition, high altitude may create discomfort and symptoms of illness that you do not experience while exercising at low elevations, such as shortness of breath, restlessness or sleeplessness at night, and headaches. (For more information on trekking at high altitude, see page 9.)

This level of fitness requires regular aerobic exercise for at least one hour 4-5 times a week. This may include aerobic fitness classes, power walking, jogging, cycling on hills, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Additionally, you must be able to sustain exercise for prolonged periods. Finally, you must have some experience with exercise at altitude.

We recommend that you start a moderate training program *several months* before departure, then slowly build up to a more strenuous level. Since training is highly sport-specific, include some hiking or running in your program. Consult your physician if you have questions concerning your underlying health. We can help answer questions for you or your physician concerning required levels of fitness and health conditions at altitude. If you have concerns about your ability to do this trip, we can suggest appropriate alternatives.

THE NEXT STEP

Ready to go? Signing up is easy!

Just call us at 1-888-MTSOBK (687-6235) and reserve your spot! You can also book a reservation online at our website (www.mtsobek.com). If you prefer to use a travel agent, he or she can book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Then Leave the Rest to Us

Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including clothing recommendations, suggested reading lists, up-to-date health advice prepared by our consulting physician (an expert in wilderness medicine), and other details from procuring visas to advice on local customs.

Why Mountain Travel Sobek is Your First Choice for Adventure

Mountain Travel Sobek is the pioneer in active adventure travel. No other adventure travel company can lay claim to that title. We were the first to take Americans trekking in Nepal, raft the wild rivers of Africa, and open up many previously inaccessible corners of the world to curious travelers. We set the standard for adventure travel and have a

strong reputation for excellence that we do everything we can to maintain. Since we are the leading adventure company, we have a lot to live up to, so we make sure we provide safe, quality trips and the best customer service to our passengers.

References

Don't take our word for how great our trips are. We'll be happy to provide you with references of satisfied past travelers.

Questions?

Feel free to call us at 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) if you still have any questions or concerns. We're here to help you. You can also check out our website at www.mtsobek.com.

Note on Itinerary

Although we will do our best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change. Please read the Limitation of Liability and Booking Conditions in the four-page Participant Information Form. You can find all this information on our website at www.mtsobek.com/faq and the form itself at www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf.

Terms & Conditions

Once you have made a deposit for a trip, you agree to be bound by all our terms and conditions including the Limitation of Liability Clause. The full Terms and Conditions can be found at www.mtsobek.com/faq/#liability or call 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) for a copy. These are partial conditions. Your participation is contingent on your signature on the full list of terms specified in the four-page Participant Information Form (www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf). Any dispute concerning, relating or referring to the Terms and Conditions, to any literature concerning this trip, or the trip itself, shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration in San Francisco, California, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association. Such proceedings will be governed by substantive California law (but not procedural law) without regard to the California Arbitration Act.

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TREKKING AT HIGH ALTITUDE

Trekking in high mountain areas provides unmatched beauty with an experience of ultimate wilderness and personal achievement. However, these attributes are counterbalanced by the hardship of exertion at high altitude. Not everyone should go to very high altitude. Anyone planning difficult mountain treks must be aware of the demands and risks imposed by very high altitude, be assured of excellent underlying health, and be prepared by rigorous training.

What Happens to the Body at High Altitude?

The body cannot fully acclimatize to altitudes above 17,000 feet, and as a result, the more time one spends at such altitudes, generally the worse one feels. At 18,000 feet, there is only one-half the amount of oxygen in the air, which imposes considerable physiological stress on the body. As a result, most trekkers feel physical discomfort of shortness of breath, nausea, insomnia, headaches, and exhaustion.

Medical Limitations and Medical Evaluation for High Altitude

Absolute age limits are impossible to define. The older person may do better than a younger travel companion because he/she knows how to pace himself and is familiar with feelings of extreme fatigue, weakness, and minor illness, which everyone has at high altitude. More often than not, attempts to predict performance at altitude are no better than guesswork. However, age is a process of deterioration; as one gets older, lung and heart capacity decreases, blood vessels narrow and lose elasticity. Over the age of 50, only very fit people who exercise regularly and have some experience with high altitude should try to go over 17,000 feet. People over sixty often get a little forgetful and even slightly confused above 16,000 feet. This is because their ability to deliver oxygen to brain cells has been compromised by the normal aging processes. The same applies to persons with diabetes, cardiac disease, poorly controlled high blood pressure, decreased lung capacity, or those on medications such as cortisone that affect the body's response to stress.

There are several ***absolute medical contraindications*** for commercial group trips to very high altitude, but most people with these conditions will screen themselves from these trips. These conditions include:

congestive heart failure, angina with exertion, troublesome cardiac dysrhythmias, emphysema or chronic obstructive lung disease, insulin-dependent diabetes, sleep apnea, thromboembolic problems, sickle cell disease, pulmonary hypertension, and serious psychiatric problems.

Other medical problems present a ***relative contraindication*** to high altitude trekking, meaning that they should be discussed seriously with your doctor and the risk to your health and life clearly understood. Many of these would not prevent travel at moderate altitudes. These include:

cardiac bypass surgery, cold and exercise-induced asthma, anemia or polycythemia, pregnancy, obesity, nasal polyps, migraines, recurrent pneumothorax, and adult onset diabetes.

All ***medications*** should be reviewed since many can increase the risk of other medical problems at altitude, for example:

diuretics (dehydration and low potassium)
birth control pills or estrogen (thromboembolism)

beta-blockers (decrease exercise capacity)

Everyone who contemplates a trip above 16,000 feet must have a thorough physical exam and evaluation to uncover any general medical problem that might flare up on a trip to a remote area where medical care is many days away. The major problems at high altitude result from impaired oxygen absorption and transportation. A high altitude trekker needs an optimal red blood cell count to carry oxygen, good lungs, a strong heart, normal kidneys and normal or well-controlled blood pressure. A resting cardiogram is necessary, but often not adequate to evaluate cardio-pulmonary function. An exercise “stress” cardiogram is suggested anyone with cardiac risk factors or a history of heart disease. Many authorities suggest a cardiac stress test for anyone over 50 years of age who does not do regular sustained aerobic activity. Pulmonary function tests may be indicated.

Unfortunately, even these tests will not predict those who will suffer severe altitude illness. The best indicator of success at altitude is recent strenuous activities at altitude. Few would argue about doing these tests in anyone with some underlying illness. The people whose performance and health are hardest to predict are the healthy-deconditioned, those who used to be athletic, but have done little for 10-20 years and now assume that they can still do it. Some physicians will advise that all this is unnecessary. But unless this physician is familiar with high altitude physiology and has been to altitudes above 16,000 recently, he/she simply cannot appreciate the degree of stress and anoxia to be encountered.

The Importance of Being in Good Physical Condition

What can one do before a trip to improve his/her prospects, assuming he/she has good results on a medical exam and physiological testing? The short answer is to *get in shape!* Quit smoking—this improves both heart and lung function. Trim off extra fat. Exercise to improve muscle strength and cardiac and respiratory function. Effective conditioning programs must contain aerobic activity that increases the heart rate for a minimum of 45-60 minutes four times per week. Strengthen leg muscles used for trekking by running, ski touring, bicycling, hiking with a pack, stair-climbing, or equivalent machines in the gym. Being “in shape” does not necessarily guarantee good performance at altitudes, but it helps. Being “out of shape” definitely increases the chances of doing poorly. Everyone, especially athletes who train compulsively, must understand that maximum exercise capacity decreases steadily with increasing altitude (3%/1,000 ft.).

How Can I Prevent Illness at High Altitude?

Begin your trip in good health and excellent physical condition, obtain all the recommended immunizations for your trip, and follow food and water precautions on the way so that preventable illnesses do not ruin your trip. It is important to understand the concept of altitude acclimatization and to recognize the symptoms of altitude illness. The discussion of altitude illness in your health information supplements this material and provides more details on acclimatization and symptoms of altitude illness.

Mountain Travel Sobek treks are designed to allow time for acclimatization while trying to follow a schedule that accommodates peoples’ time constraints. Certain aspects of the trek organization and schedule that may seem illogical are designed to maximize acclimatization. For instance, once at altitude, elevation gains between camps are limited: you may climb higher during the day but descend to sleep (climb high, sleep low). Extra nights are spent at the same elevation after each 2,000-3,000-foot gain over 12,000 feet.

Drink a lot of water. Although pulmonary edema and cerebral edema are problems of fluid retention, increased water intake facilitates adaptation to altitude. Increased fluids help the kidney to excrete excess salts that bind extra water in tissues. Drink more than you feel you need. Water losses at altitude are very large and dehydration is

commonplace. Most of this water is lost as vapor due to increased respiration in a cold, dry atmosphere with very low vapor pressure. Eating is also important. Diet should be high in carbohydrates, with adequate amounts of protein to rebuild muscle that is being broken down by strenuous exercise.

Acetazolamide (Diamox) can facilitate acclimatization, prevent acute mountain sickness and treat mild cases of mountain sickness. It is also very helpful for altitude insomnia and should be used in preference to sleeping pills or Valium, which are dangerous at altitude. Diamox produces faster, more regular breathing with higher oxygen levels during sleep. Diamox can be very helpful, but it must not be used as a substitute to push through symptoms of altitude sickness. There have been cases of high altitude cerebral and pulmonary edema in people taking Diamox. ***Most persons do not need to use this medication routinely at altitude if their trip allows adequate time for ascent.***

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