

MT KILIMANJARO THINGS TO KNOW

Mount Kilimanjaro climbing is one of the ultimate accomplishments for both first time and experienced trekkers. Kilimanjaro has a range of different climates and you need to be equipped so that you are comfortable at the different altitudes.

As you ascend, Kilimanjaro weather gradually changes and gets colder and the increasingly thinner air can bring about altitude sickness. Altitude sickness is caused by the failure of the body to adapt quickly enough to the reduced level of oxygen in the air as one gains altitude.

While climbing you may experience different symptoms of mild altitude sickness, with the most common being headaches, light-headedness, nausea, sleeplessness and a loss of appetite, loss of balance and dizziness. In most cases these ailments are controlled by taking painkillers such as panadol or similar.

All climbers are advised to countercheck their body conditions, and should openly communicate with their Guides. Our experienced guides are all well trained in highly specialized First Responders Wilderness training and can spot acute mountain sickness. Our guides carry oxygen on all climbs and perform daily health and pulse oxymeter checks, which measures both your heart rate and percentage of oxygen in your blood. We want to ensure and monitor your health and safety at all altitudes.

- You will be sleeping in tents every night on the mountain, so it is important to have proper weather rated sleeping bags (we can hire) and clothing.

- Walking pace should be slow and steady. We recommend you take your time and walk slowly to give yourself the best chance of fully acclimatizing as well as reducing fatigue for the following days. Our guides will set the pace – slowly, slowly!

- Minor altitude sickness on Kilimanjaro causes most climbers to experience a loss of appetite, however it's important to eat well and maintain your energy.

- Staying hydrated is essential drinking a minimum of 3-4 litres per day. We recommend reducing your caffeine intake as it has a diarrhetic effect which can cause dehydration.

- Trekking high, sleeping low is the best technique to help your body acclimatize. Our climbing itineraries have been prepared to follow this practice, giving you the best possible chance of success to reach the summit.

- It is strongly recommended to not smoke or drink alcohol when climbing.

As always it's best to seek a doctor's advice before you travel and upon arrival at your briefing listen to your Guide's advice. Many clients choose to take Diamox before attempting Kilimanjaro and report noticeable increase in comfort and reduction of symptoms. This of course is an individual choice. We advise trying the medication prior to leaving for the climb to detect any possible adverse side effects. Numbing of fingers, cheeks and toes is common.

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia occurs when your body is unable to generate enough heat to keep your body at a healthy temperature. As the weather on Mount Kilimanjaro can change quickly and a covering of mist and rain is commonplace, wet clothes can increase your chances of decreased body temperature. Proper clothing and rain gear can usually prevent this from occurring.

SUN RELATED INJURIES

This is by far, the most common affliction of climbers on the mountain. Most people overwhelmingly underestimate our close proximity to the equator and high altitudes. About 55% of the earth's protective atmosphere is below an altitude of 5000m. Above that height, far less ultraviolet light is being filtered out, making the sun's rays much more powerful. It is strongly recommended to use a 30+ sun protection cream at lower altitudes, and a total block cream above an altitude of 3000m. Wearing sunglasses when climbing is a must, especially for summit as the morning reflection of the sun can be intense on top.

BE POSITIVE & ENJOY THE JOURNEY

This is a memorable trip of a lifetime experience and to stay positive ensures your success. Your guides are the 'masters of the mountain' and have taken hundreds of people just like you to the summit. Listen to the advice of your mountain crew and you will have an incredible time.