

Allergic Reaction	Symptoms	Treatment
Localized skin reaction with swelling, pain, possible blistering Example: Bee sting	Severe swelling of the face, hand, or foot, redness and itching	HYDROCORTISONE CREAM 1% (Cortaid®, Cortizone®)  DIPHENHYDRAMINE (Benadryl®) 25-50mg  PREDNISONE (oral steroid) 20mg, 5-7 days (Rx)  Seek medical advice immediately if there is no response to treatment
Severe life-threatening allergic reactions Example: Multiple bee stings, shellfish ingestion	Throat swelling, shortness of breath and possible shock	EPINEPHRINE AUTO INJECTOR (EpiPen®) (Rx in USA).  Use according to directions and contact emergency services immediately

## ALTITUDE ILLNESS

Altitude illness, also known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), is a condition that occurs in many travelers making rapid ascents to high altitude. It most often occurs at altitudes above 7874 ft/ 2,400 m when the body reacts to lower levels of oxygen. The illness may occur several hours to days after ascending to high altitudes and symptoms may range from mild to severe.

Mild symptoms associated with altitude illness may include headache, fatigue, sleep disturbance, loss of appetite, nausea, and shortness of breath with exertion. More severe symptoms may include shortness of breath while resting, rapid heart rate while resting, decreased urine output, visual changes, severe headache, loss of coordination (ataxia), mental confusion, and a productive cough.

## Prevention

The best prevention for altitude illness is to ascend no more than 1,000 ft / 305 m of sleeping altitude per day when at altitudes greater than 8,000-10,000 ft / 2440-3048m above sea level. If you are flying to high altitude destinations or making rapid ascents with excessive altitude gain, medications such as ACETAZOLAMIDE (Diamox®) or DEXAMETHASONE (Decadron®) may be prescribed.

Medication	Dosing	Side effects & contraindications
ACETAZOLAMIDE (Diamox®)	125 mg - 250 mg (Rx) 1 tablet twice daily  Start 24 - 48 hours prior to ascent above 8,000 ft - 10,000 ft / 2440 m - 3048 m  Continue taking for 2-3 days at altitude	CAUTION: Do not take ACETAZOLAMIDE (Diamox®) if you are allergic to sulfa drugs.  Common side effects include abnormal skin sensation, frequent urination, and unusual taste with carbonated beverages
DEXAMETHASONE (Decadron®)	2 mg - 4 mg (Rx)  2 mg every 6 hours or 4 mg every 12 hours.  Start taking on ascent and do not take for longer than 1 week	Option for travelers with sulfa-based allergies.  Common side effects include nausea, insomnia, anxiety, dizziness, heartburn, and fluid retention

## Treatment

The most important treatment for altitude illness is rapid descent to lower altitudes. Drink plenty of fluids, eat regularly and treat symptoms such as headache with IBUPROFEN (Advil®), see *Travel medicine kit*. If symptoms are severe and/or rapid descent is not possible, drug treatment may be needed. The following table outlines altitude illness treatment with ACETAZOLAMIDE (Diamox®) or DEXAMETHASONE (Decadron®).