



Psychiatric and Mood Disorders at Philmont

Many Philmont participants are being treated for behavioral or mood disorders. This is common, and should not prevent participation in a Philmont adventure. It is important that all psychiatric and mood disorders be well controlled prior to participating in a Philmont adventure.

A Philmont trek can be emotionally stressful as well as physically demanding, and may increase the intensity of symptoms of some psychiatric disorders. It is important that both participants and leaders are aware of the symptoms of these disorders and can recognize these symptoms early.

Prior to coming to Philmont

Hiking at altitude, participating in strenuous activity, and lack of sleep are all normal parts of a Philmont experience. It is important to keep in mind how these activities may affect participants with psychiatric and mood disorders. Strenuous shakedown hikes prior to coming to Philmont will help participants identify how this activity will affect them.

During your Philmont medical exam prior to arriving at Philmont, discuss with your physician how altitude and strenuous activity may affect you, and develop a plan to address any change in symptoms. It is important to discuss this plan with adult advisors they can help to monitor changes in participants and help to prevent problems.

Medications

Philmont recommends against any major changes in medications in the three months prior to your trek. It is important that you take your medication exactly as you do at home—the same amount and same frequency. Philmont also strongly advises against stopping medications while on trek. Abruptly discontinuing a medication can lead to symptoms such as difficulty sleeping, depression, anxiety, and fatigue. These symptoms may be both physical and/or psychological; certain medications may also make patients more susceptible to dehydration or more sensitive to heat illness. Be sure to discuss with your physician how to prevent or decrease the side effects of your medicines.

Bring a backup supply of all prescription medications for your entire Philmont trip. Carry extra emergency doses in the backcountry, and bring a backup supply to store at the Philmont Infirmary, in the event that your medications become lost or damaged. Storing medications in the Infirmary allows the Philmont medical staff to quickly resupply a patient if they lose their medication.

On the Trail

Problems may develop with your psychological disorder or medications while you are at Philmont, just as there can be problems at home. The Philmont Infirmary is staffed with medical providers 24 hours a day, and can consult with your physician back home to help make your Philmont experience successful.

Please feel free to contact the Philmont Infirmary (575)376-2281 Ext: 1150 if you have any questions.