



Diabetes at Philmont

Participants with diabetes can have a successful Philmont experience but some prior planning and preparation is essential.

Before Your Trek

- Well-controlled diabetes is defined as that which has involved no changes to medication dosage or delivery method in the last 6 months, along with an HbA1c of less than 8.
- Even with well-controlled diabetes, multiple shakedown hikes are integral to understanding and predicting how blood sugar and insulin needs will fluctuate with elevated levels of strenuous activity.

Diabetes on the Trail

Due to the strenuous nature of a Philmont trek, participants at Philmont are provided a high-calorie and high-carbohydrate diet. Philmont suggests that participants look at the [Philmont menu](#) and use shakedown hikes as an opportunity to adjust medications in consultation with their physician to account for the change in activity and diet.

Because hiking with a pack and at altitude causes an increased glucose demand, some participants have found that it is safer to maintain a blood glucose level slightly higher at Philmont than their normal to prevent sudden drops. Participants taking insulin should meet with their physicians ahead of their trek to discuss potential challenges and changes to their diabetes management regimen.

Because of changes to their routine and activity levels, participants should check their blood glucose often while on the trail at Philmont.

Medication Management on the Trail

Philmont's remote location makes prescription medication refills and delivery quite difficult. Due to diabetic participants' heightened activity levels and insulin needs, it is recommended that participants bring twice as much medication and supplies as they anticipate needing. The Philmont Infirmary can store extra medication and supplies and will have them available should a participant require more medication once on the trail.

Participants can arrange for **one** delivery of medical supplies/medications to their crew during a trek by visiting the Infirmary during your check-in process. Medications/supplies should be packaged and labeled with the participant's name and expedition number. Supplies delivered to the backcountry must be carried for the remainder of the trek and cannot be returned to Base Camp.

It can be difficult to maintain the temperature of medications while hiking, and refrigeration is not available at all backcountry camps. Philmont recommends the use of insulated storage bags or evaporation cooled storage bags to protect medications from extreme temperatures.



Diabetic Emergencies on the Trail

In the event of an emergency low blood sugar, participants should keep a glucose replacement and/or snacks with them at all times. To prevent attracting animals or contaminating gear, Philmont suggests glucose replacements be kept in a sealed package. Once a crew arrives at Philmont, their Ranger will train participants on the correct way to store emergency glucose/snacks for quick access while in camp.

In cases of severe low blood sugar, some physicians may suggest the use of an injectable medication named Glucagon. Glucagon is permitted, but as with any emergency medication, several members of the participant's crew should be trained on how to properly assist the patient in administering the medication.

Any questions should be directed to the Philmont Infirmery at (575) 376-2281, Ext: 1150