

WINTER 2015

# Vail Valley

## Big Paws to Fill

LEARNING  
TO BE A  
SEARCH  
AND  
RESCUE  
DOG

JEWELS  
THAT DAZZLE

VAIL'S  
FABLED IGLOO

2015 FIS ALPINE  
WORLD SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS  
SCHEDULE





# Altitude and Attitude

by Dr. Douglas Mayeda, M.D.

Preparation and knowledge will help alleviate any travel concerns.

Ascent profile is the concept of how quickly one ascends to a certain elevation... some people with a known propensity to being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) may consider staying at a lesser elevation a night before arriving to the Vail Valley.

The only prescription medication practically used with any significant evidence based literature to prevent or minimize AMS is the acetazolamide (Diamox) and ideally should be taken a day before travel, day of travel, and at most one day after arrival. This is contraindicated if you have a sulfa allergy and your primary physician can assist with this process.

Approximately 20% of your fluid loss occurs from the respiratory tract, and since your baseline respiratory rate is higher, you must be cognizant of drinking more fluids. Unlike in many climates which you are accustomed to, you will not be perspiring profusely to alert one to fluid loss. Diluted electrolyte based drinks and water are ideal. Caffeinated beverages and alcohol should be used in moderation initially and smoking should be curtailed.

Your baseline heart rate is usually slightly higher initially, and with exertion, it is not unusual to feel short of breath. Patients with hypertension also tend to run slightly higher blood pressures at this elevation.

A sensation of lightheadedness, nausea, slight headache, lassitude and abdominal bloating are milder symptoms related to the altitude.

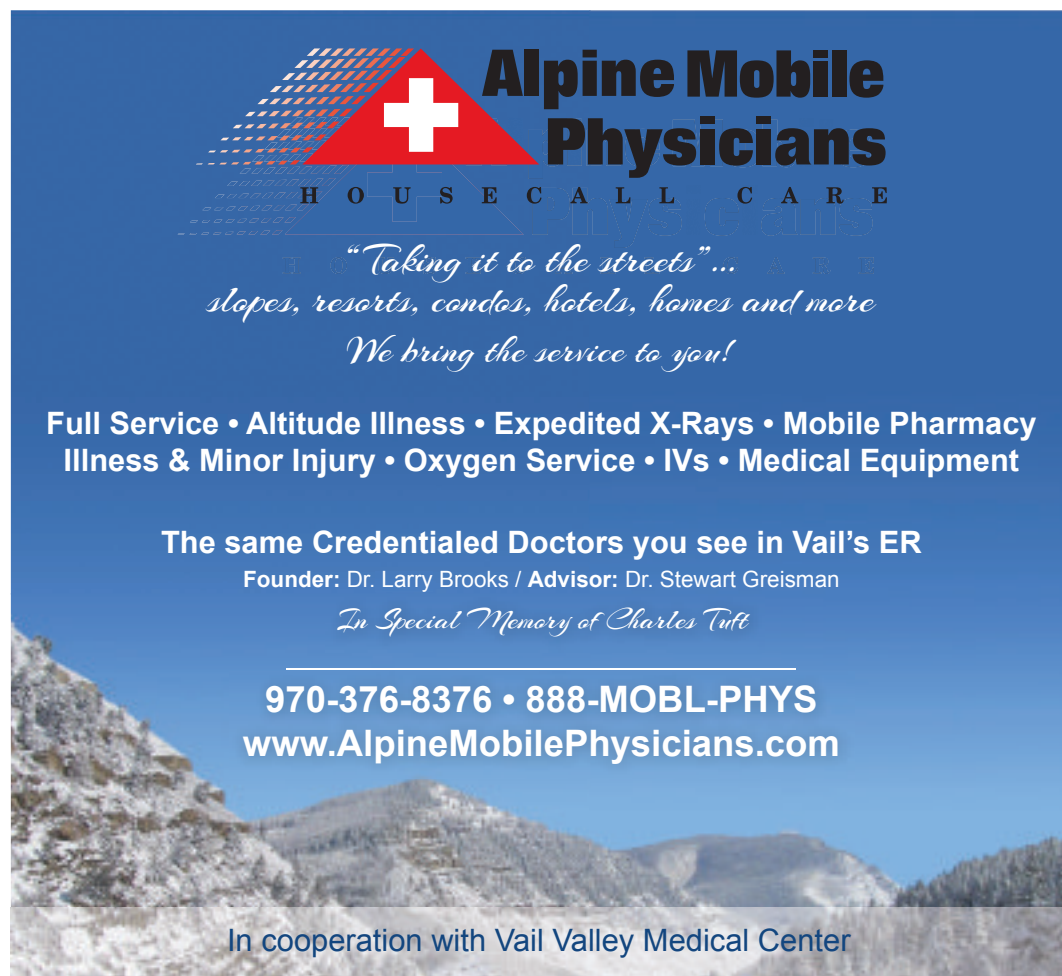
There is one recent study (albeit highly critiqued in the medical literature), that ibuprofen may be of some benefit. Additionally, it has been reported that ginkgo biloba assisted some individuals.

The illness itself is a spectrum of presentations; if one experiences persistent dizziness, shortness of breath at rest, nausea and vomiting, inability to sleep, headaches, any chest tightness or discomfort, and consistent fatigue, you should seek medical advice and attention.

AMS affects 25-30 percent of all patients traveling to the Vail Valley, but to a varying degree. This is where

the attitude comes into play, as with all medical situations. Everyone who travels to high altitude experiences hypoxia to some extent, until their body adapts to the lower oxygen levels. At the turn of the century, year 2000, Colorado has the highest mean population in the U.S., or approximately 20 percent living above 7000 ft elevation. It is also considered among the fittest populations in this country.

There is a multitude of medical care providers and resources in this community to assist you in your travel and the ability to enjoy your stay. [VVmag](#)



**Alpine Mobile Physicians**  
HOUSE CALL CARE

*"Taking it to the streets" ...  
slopes, resorts, condos, hotels, homes and more  
We bring the service to you!*

**Full Service • Altitude Illness • Expedited X-Rays • Mobile Pharmacy  
Illness & Minor Injury • Oxygen Service • IVs • Medical Equipment**

**The same Credentialed Doctors you see in Vail's ER**  
Founder: Dr. Larry Brooks / Advisor: Dr. Stewart Greisman  
*In Special Memory of Charles Tuft*

**970-376-8376 • 888-MOBL-PHYS  
[www.AlpineMobilePhysicians.com](http://www.AlpineMobilePhysicians.com)**

**In cooperation with Vail Valley Medical Center**