



BSA SAFETY MOMENT

RISK ADVISORY FOR HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

Do you want the best possible experience on your high-adventure trek? How can you be sure your entire crew can handle the strenuous activity? Make sure you and your entire group read and understand the risk advisory before you begin!

GENERAL INFORMATION

The lure of the adventure can pose your first risk. Signing up for a trip just because it sounds great may be problematic if you aren't healthy or prepared enough to make it through. Understanding what you will experience and what will be expected of you during a high-adventure activity is the first step in making sure that everyone has a great time on the adventure.

Ask yourself, "Am I capable of completing this trek both physically and mentally?" Cardiac issues, hypertension, asthma, diabetes, being too short for your weight, allergies, or seizure disorders are common medical conditions that may make your experience difficult. So, if in doubt, make a plan to get yourself and your entire crew ready now.

Don't know what to do first? The risk advisory is a great place to begin. Many of the common physical elements you will encounter will be briefly described in the risk advisory. Developing a plan is different for each group and each adventure. For example, if everyone in your trek lives near sea level and is traveling to Philmont for a 10-day mountain trek, a best practice will include getting acclimated to the altitude change. You can download a risk advisory at the [Annual Health and Medical Record \(AHMR\)](#) website for all four of the BSA high-adventure bases.

Conduct a self-assessment and be honest with yourself! Review the Annual Health and Medical Record early in the planning phase. Making any necessary health changes early will help you achieve your goals. Where appropriate, be sure that each youth member's parent or guardian has reviewed the risk advisory to be sure they understand the risks and can help plan for the adventure.

Bring the risk advisory to your health-care provider and discuss the specific trek with them. Be sure to talk about anything you think may be difficult for you and ask if you are physically able to go. Complete parts A, B, and C of the AHMR.

Make sure your crew can keep up on the trail too! The risk advisory will help you develop a plan on how to physically train for the event, give you resources about the trek itself, and inform you about how to prepare everyone and everything for your adventure. Get everyone involved in getting physically and mentally fit for the trail.

Risk advisories are great tools for other events as well. Your council may have already developed its own risk advisory for a high-adventure program, summer camp, or an event like a camporee. If not, an easy-to-use risk advisory template is available to get you started.

High-adventure excursions can be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many. Understanding what to expect and how to prepare are crucial parts of all successful high-adventure experiences. Risk advisories help adult trek leaders, parents, older Scouts, and their health-care providers determine which adventures are best suited for the participants so that everyone has a great time.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- BSA AHMR landing page: www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/
- Medical Risk Factors for Your Participation in Scouting: www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/risk-factors/
- Council Supplemental Risk Advisory Template: www.scouting.org/filestore/healthsafety/doc/council_risk_advisory_template.doc