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The 28th Annual
**High Country Nuclear
Medicine Conference**

High Country Committee of SNM

Acute Mountain Sickness

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is the most common form of illness associated with a rapid ascent to altitudes exceeding 7,000-8,000 feet. (Vail is located at an altitude of 8,150 feet.) Symptoms include shortness of breath with mild exertion, headache, lassitude, loss of appetite, insomnia and even nausea and vomiting. AMS typically resolves spontaneously in 2 – 4 days; headache can be treated with aspirin, acetaminophen, (Tylenol) or ibuprofen. Good hydration coupled with avoidance of alcohol and strenuous exercise for 1 – 2 days after arriving at high elevation will minimize the risk of developing AMS. AMS can also be prevented by Diamox (acetazolamide) 125 mg twice a day beginning 24 hours before ascent and continuing for 2-3 days after arrival at the higher elevation. Diamox is a prescription drug; it is a diuretic, will cause increased urination and may cause numbness or tingling in the fingers, toes or around the mouth. Diamox is contraindicated in those allergic to sulfa drugs.