

## PLAN YOUR HIKE

Your safety is your responsibility while hiking. Planning ahead can be the key to a fun and safe adventure and is an important step in being prepared & ready. When planning your hike, make sure to include the following information:

**Pick the right trail for you & your group.** Recognize your abilities and the abilities of your group. Pick a trail that everyone can complete and enjoy.

**Leave a trip plan.** Include where you will be walking or hiking, your contact information, when you plan to arrive & return and who is coming with you. Leave this information with a trusted family member or friend that is not going on the trip with you.

**Have an emergency plan.** Know what to do if you or your hiking companions become lost or injured. Consider learning CPR and basic first aid.

**Have a way to communicate.** If you are using your cell phone, keep the battery fully charged. Searching for a cell signal can quickly drain your phone battery. Think about turning off your phone or switching to airplane mode until you need it. Consider having a personal locator beacon should you need to call for help.

**Be weather ready.** Check the weather before you head out on your hike. If conditions are not ideal, don't take the chance!



# HIKING SAFETY GUIDE

## KNOW YOUR LIMITS

**What is my experience level with hiking?** Do I go hiking often, or is this my first time hitting the trails?

**How much equipment, food and water (weight) can I comfortably carry in a backpack?** How long can I carry a backpack with all the essentials?

**Am I physically fit for the hike I would like to do?** Have I practiced hiking up and down steep hills or am I more comfortable on flat, paved paths?

**Have I ever hiked in this environment before?** Environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity take time to get used to, especially if you live in a different environment from the area you are visiting.

**Am I able to go to higher elevations?** More effort is required to hike at higher elevations due to the reduced amount of oxygen available in the air. If you're unsure, ask your healthcare provider.

**Am I hiking alone, or do I plan to bring a friend?** It is safer to hike with a companion, but if you prefer to go solo take extra measurements to ensure that you are prepared.

## HIKE SMART

**Let the slowest hiker set the pace.** Always stay together. Put the slowest hiker near the front to keep your group together. Staying together helps reduce the chance of someone getting lost, in addition to if someone gets injured you are there to help.

**Keep track of your time and distance.** Remember that your total hike time includes the time it took you to hike to your destination and back to your starting point. If any part of your hike is uphill, plan for it to take at least double the time it took you to go downhill. Be aware of the time you set out and set a turnaround time so you don't get stuck outside in the dark.

**Yield to uphill hikers.** Be courteous and cautious of others out on the trails. If you are downhill, carefully step to the side to let others pass.

**Take breaks often.** Know your limits and pay attention to how you are feeling when on the trail. A good rule of thumb is that if you can talk while you are walking, you are traveling at the perfect speed.

**Eat snacks and drink water.** Hiking can drain your energy quickly. Dehydration and heat exhaustion may sneak up on you while you are hiking on the trails. Be sure to drink water as you are thirsty. Snack on nutritional foods such as trail mix, nuts and granola bars to keep your energy high.

**Take your time and watch your step.** Be careful and watch where you are walking, especially on slippery areas or near cliffs. Stick to dry paths and solid rock areas with good footing.

**Be aware of wildlife.** Know what wildlife are in the area and avoid wearing strong scents.

## EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

### —LOST PERSON—

- Call 911 and tell them:
  - ✓ The last known location the lost person was seen, including GPS coordinates if you have them.
  - ✓ Types & colors of clothing they are wearing and what equipment the lost person was carrying.
  - ✓ Any medical conditions they may have.
- If you don't have a cell phone or cell signal, flag down hikers in the area and ask them to call 911.
- If you don't see any hikers, you may need to split the group and send some people to find help. (Remember to stay together.)

### —INJURED PERSON—

- When dealing with minor injuries, use a first aid kit to clean and cover the affected area. In the event of major injuries be sure to:
  - ✓ Control bleeding by applying pressure to the wound.
  - ✓ Make sure the person is breathing.
  - ✓ Minimize movement.
  - ✓ Call 911.
- If the injured person is able to walk, help might be as simple as helping the person walk out.
- If the person is unable to walk, call 911.
- Make sure someone stays with the injured person until help arrives.

## STAY TOGETHER

Stay with the group, pay attention and don't wander off the trail.

## BE A BUDDY

Make sure everyone has a buddy and stays with them at all times.

## STAY PUT

Unless there is immediate threat to life, if you're lost always stay put & do not wander.

## DON'T FORGET TO PACK THE ESSENTIALS



**NAVIGATION**  
Map, GPS System & Compass



**SUN PROTECTION**  
Sunglasses, Sunscreen & Hat



**INSULATION**  
Jacket, Hat, Gloves, Rain Shell & Thermal Underwear



**ILLUMINATION**  
Flashlight, Lanterns & Headlamp



**FIRST-AID SUPPLIES**  
First Aid Kit



**REPAIR KIT AND TOOLS**  
Duct Tape, Knife, Screwdriver & Scissors



**HYDRATION**  
Water & Water Treatment Supplies



**NUTRITION**  
Food, Non Cooking Items



**EMERGENCY SHELTER**  
Tent, Space Blanket, Tarp & Bivy

