

# High-Adventure Risk Advisory to Health-Care Providers and Parents

## Yellowstone High Adventure Outpost

Adventure West Council, BSA

Council Phone: 307-234-7329 Website: [adventurewestscouts.org](http://adventurewestscouts.org)

### **Yellowstone High Adventure Outpost Experience.**

The YHAO experience is not risk-free; however, by taking responsibility for one's own health and safety, and cooperating with staff, it's expected that most participants will have an enjoyable, safe YHAO experience.

Please call the Casper office at 307-234-7329 if you have any questions. All participants should review all materials and websites related to the experiences they are planning to have at YHAO.

**Risk Advisory.** Participants at YHAO should be physically fit, have the proper clothing and equipment, be willing to follow instructions, work as a team with your crew, and take responsibility for your own health and safety. Each crew is required to have at least two members trained in wilderness first aid and CPR.

All staff members are trained in Wilderness first aid and CPR. They can assist participants in recognizing and responding to accidents, injuries, and illnesses. However, response times are affected by location, terrain, weather or other emergencies and could be delayed for hours or even days in a wilderness setting.

The weather at YHAO is characterized by significant shifts in temperature. The camp sits at an elevation of 6,400 feet, which means mornings can be chilly, sometimes dipping to 30°F. June campers should especially make preparations for cooler weather. Afternoons in July may get as high as 90°F. Afternoon thunderstorms are possible. The air is very dry and many experience dry skin and chapped lips. A Nalgene or water bottle is essential.

- Each participant must be able to carry 25% of their own body weight.
- Each participant must be able to hike 5-12 miles per day in a mountain wilderness.
- Elevations range from 6,000' to 10,200' over trails that are steep and rocky.
- Kayaking/rafting participants need to be strong swimmers with a basic knowledge of boating and physically able to self-rescue in a kayak or raft. Participants that do not pass the "flip-test" at the beginning of camp cannot participate in boating.

**Allergy or Anaphylaxis.** People who have had an anaphylactic reaction from any cause will be required to have appropriate treatment (i.e. at least one unexpired epinephrine auto-injector) in sufficient quantity to last the entire trip. All members of the crew should know how to administer the auto-injector. If you do not bring an epinephrine auto-injector with you, you will be required to purchase one before you will be allowed to participate.

**Medication.** Each participant who needs medication must bring enough medicine for the duration of the trip. Be aware that altitude/heat/exertion etc. can affect a medication's efficacy. It is not uncommon for participants to use more medication (particularly insulin and albuterol) than anticipated due to unfamiliar conditions faced on the trek.

**Seizures (Epilepsy).** The seizure disorder must be well-controlled by medication. **A well-controlled disorder is one in which 12 months have passed without a seizure.** Individuals with seizure conditions should familiarize others with signs and symptoms in the event that a seizure occurs in the backcountry.

**High Blood Pressure.** Upon arrival at YHAO, all adult participants may have their blood pressure checked. People diagnosed with hypertension should have controlled blood pressure before attending YHAO and should continue their medications to keep the blood pressure at or near normal levels. Those individuals with a blood pressure consistently greater than 160/95 at YHAO may be kept off the trail.

**Diabetes Mellitus.** Participants with diabetes can have a successful YHAO experience by good planning prior to their trek. Both the person with diabetes and others in their crew or group need to be able to recognize signs of excessively high or low blood sugar. An insulin-dependent person who was diagnosed or had a change in delivery system (e.g., insulin pump) or dosage in the last six months is advised to consult with their physician before participating. A person with diabetes who has had frequent hospitalizations or who has had problems with low blood sugar should not participate until better control of the diabetes has been achieved.

**Asthma.** Asthma must be well-controlled before participating at Philmont. Well-controlled asthma is defined as:

- The use of a rescue inhaler (albuterol) fewer than two times per week (except use for the prevention of exercise-induced asthma); awakened by asthma symptoms less than two times per month.
- Well-controlled asthma may include the use of long-acting bronchodilators, inhaled steroids, or oral medications such as Singulair.

You may not be allowed to participate if:

- You have asthma not controlled by medication; or
- You have been hospitalized/gone to the emergency room to treat asthma in the past six months; or
- You required treatment by oral steroids (prednisone) in the past six months.

All members of the crew should know how to assist in administering the rescue inhaler and where the inhaler is located. Any person who has needed treatment for asthma in the past three years must carry a rescue inhaler on the trek. If you do not bring a rescue inhaler, you must purchase one before you will be allowed to participate.

#### **Recent Musculoskeletal Injuries and Orthopedic**

**Surgery.** Participants will put a great deal of strain on their joints. Individuals who have significant musculoskeletal problems (including back problems) or have had orthopedic surgery or injuries within the last six months must have a letter of clearance from their treating physician to be considered for approval, and YHAO should be contacted in advance of participation. Permission is not guaranteed.

**Psychological and Emotional Difficulties.** Parents and advisors should be aware that no high-adventure experience is designed to assist participants in overcoming psychological or emotional problems. Experience demonstrates that these problems frequently become worse when a participant is under stress from the physical and mental challenges of a remote wilderness setting. Medication must never be stopped prior to participation and should be continued throughout the entire experience.

**Cardiac or Cardiovascular Disease.** Adults or youth who have a history of chest pain, myocardial infarction (heart attack), a family history of premature heart disease, or heart surgery including angioplasty may consider a physician-supervised stress test. Even if the stress test results are normal, the testing is done

without portage packs or canoes and does not guarantee safety. If the results are abnormal, the individual is advised not to participate.

**Weight Limits.** Each participant in a YAO trek should not exceed the maximum acceptable weight for height in the table shown in Part C of the Annual Health and Medical Record. Those who fall within the recommended weight limits are much more likely to have an enjoyable trek and avoid incurring injuries and other health risks. Due to the risks of logistics of backcountry rescue, no participant's weight can exceed 295 pounds.

**Food.** If a participant has dietary needs or restrictions, it is critical that this information is provided in the dietary restrictions and allergies portions of their registration in Black Pug. We cannot plan for dietary restrictions that we are not aware of at least 2 weeks before you come to YHAO.