

Acetazolamide

Adult doses:

- › 125 mg twice daily; (250 mg twice a day if >100kg) for **prevention** of acute mountain sickness (AMS)
- › 250 mg twice daily for **treatment** of acute mountain sickness (AMS)

Pediatric dose:

- › 2.5 mg/kg every 12 hours for **prevention** of AMS (maximum dose 125 mg twice daily)
- › 2.5 mg/kg every 12 hours for **treatment** of AMS (maximum dose 250 mg twice daily)

Begin drug the day before ascent, take each day of ascent, and continue taking for 48 hours after you arrive at the highest altitude.

Possible side effects

- Paresthesias (commonly causes tingling or numbness in the fingers and toes, and occasionally around the mouth. This is not an allergic reaction and the medication does not need to be discontinued).
- Hearing problems, anorexia, change in how things taste (carbonated beverages may taste metallic), nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, more urine than usual, sleepiness, confusion.

Do not use this drug if:

- Your liver or kidneys are not fully functioning.
- You are having long-term treatment of angle-closure glaucoma; further closure of the angle may occur while worsening of glaucoma is masked by lower IOP.
- Hypersensitivity to acetazolamide or any ingredients in the formulation.
- Severe allergy to sulfonamide medications.

Comments about using acetazolamide:

- Consider acetazolamide for prevention of AMS in travellers anticipating rapid ascent to sleeping altitudes above 2,800 m (9,200 ft). Acetazolamide has the longest history of use for prevention and treatment of AMS of any drug. It works by improving acclimatization, not by masking symptoms.
 - › Acetazolamide works by acidifying the blood. This causes an increase in respiration and arterial oxygenation and thus aids in acclimatization.
 - › Individuals with a history of life-threatening reactions to sulfa drugs or multiple drug allergies should have a trial of acetazolamide administered in a controlled environment at home before the trip. Those with a history of mild sulfa reactions or rashes can take acetazolamide safely.