



Global Himalayan Expedition

Fitness Guidelines

Congratulations to all of you who will be joining us on the 2019 Expeditions

We look forward to welcoming you in the city of Leh in India, the starting point of the journey to Lighten up a remote village in Himalayas.

Since every step of the journey will be in high altitude, starting in Leh 3500 meters above sea level, we expect, that when you arrive in Leh, you will be in good physical shape, so that your body can handle the physical stress, you will experience when being active in high altitudes.

Some might compare trekking to regular walking, thinking the demand of a good physical shape is to exaggerate, but when trekking is done in high altitude, your body will be in a constant lack of oxygen, which means, that besides the lack of breath, your heartrate will be increased and your muscles will reach the fatigue level very fast. Just as if your where doing cardio for a longer period with high insensitive.

Furthermore, a whole day of trekking can be tuff for your back and joints, so to prevent any injuries or pain on that account, a good strong core is very essential for trekking.

Finally, yet importantly, we have a session of mountain biking on the program this summer, which means that biking skills are essentials, again together with a good cardio.

Altogether, when you arrive in Leh, we expect that you have

- A good cardio (for trekking in thin air with increased heartrate)
- A good core (for stabilizing your body and protecting your back during the trek, and for carrying the weight of a backpack)
- Experience with biking and have taken some longer biking trips (so that your body can handle 6 hours or more on the mountainbike)

What can you do to be in an acceptable fitness level when you arrive in Leh?

First, train regularly and make sure that you are challenged during your exercise, so that you will push your body and learn how to function with increased hear rate. We have given some examples below, to what a good focus could be during exercises:

Running/thread mill/cross-trainer

Do long periods (minimum 1 hour) in order to teach your body to work for a longer distance with increased heart rate. Make sure that you several times during a session challenge yourself in order to feel short of breath. For example, during running, you can add some sprints uphill - uphill only to decrease the impact on your joints.

Staircases

To increase the fitness level and the muscles around the knees and hips, which will help you absorb any impacts while trekking and walking, exercise on a staircase can be very helpful. Only do the exercises upstairs and walk slowly down stairs, with your weight mainly on the back leg.

Ideas for staircase training:

- **Running upstairs.** Focus: make it soundless, this will help you to minimize the impact on your joints, especially the knees.
- Walk backwards up the stairs, having the weight on the uphill leg, and making it lift you up. Avoid that your hip goes out to the side. You should be totally still in your upper body. For balance training: stand on your toes during the exercise
- **Jump up the staircase.** Focus: Silent jumping, meaning that you hardly make a noise in your feet/legs when you land on the stairs. This is very difficult, but you will experience that each time you do this exercise, it will be more and more silent.

Core exercises and Balance

Core exercises train the muscles in your pelvis, lower back, hips and abdomen to work in harmony. This leads to better balance and stability, whether it comes to trekking and mountain biking or when doing your daily activities.

All kind of classic core exercises can be used, but make sure that you do the exercise correct by following the guidelines and focus given in each exercise.

Examples of core exercises: The plank, side plank, crunches, V-sits, Russian twist, swimming on the floor – among others. A quick internet search on core exercises, stability training or Pilates can provide you with plenty of inspiration and guiding.

Finally, a good balance can always be helpful in all matters. You can add a lot of balance training to your core and staircase sessions, but a very simple and easy way to increase your balance is to stand on one leg when brushing your teeth. When you handle this perfectly, move on to closing your eyes while standing on one leg.

Yoga

Yoga has many positive influences on your body, but what to be highlighted is the breathing techniques, which you will find very useful when dealing with the lack of oxygen in the altitudes.

ENJOY – we look forward to seeing you in Leh strong and well prepared!

