

# Tips For Dealing With Utah's Climate

Tips for acclimating to the dry air and high elevation

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Utah's high elevation and dry climate can make your first couple days visiting a little rough. With some preparation you can avoid being saddled with lethargy, headaches, nausea, for your vacation. By staying hydrated, gradually acclimating, and being sun smart you'll be able to enjoy more time enjoying your time in Utah.

## Hydration Tips

Utah's dry climate can zap the moisture out of you and often quicker than expected. By following these hydration tips you can avoid fatigue and spend less time acclimating to the elevation

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- The easiest and most straightforward way to stay hydrated is to try and drink more than you would at home.
  - Start and end your day with a glass of water. Getting a good start on your day's hydration will give you energy, and going to bed hydrated will help you sleep and start the next day feeling great.
  - Focus on staying hydrated throughout the day, not just when you get thirsty. More frequent smaller sips of water throughout the day is better than chugging water just a couple times a day. Having a water bottle handy at all times is a great way to remember to drink frequently.
  - Be sure to replace electrolytes. While you won't need to drink a sports drink for all your hydration needs, remembering to drink something with sodium and potassium can help keep you moving throughout the day.
  - Remember to drink even in cold weather. While you might not feel as thirsty while out playing in the snow, the dry air is still doing its thing and the exercise is still using up water. So take a few swigs from the water fountain every time you stop inside a lodge or keep a water bottle on you to keep happy and hydrated.

## **Elevation Tips**

As you gain elevation, the air contains less and less oxygen. This can lead to a crummy first few days as your body gets used to dealing with the drop in oxygen. Here are a few things to consider and try out to help your body as it gets used to the altitude.

- Try staying at a lower elevation, then spend your days up higher. If you've had issues with elevation in the past, consider staying at a hotel lower down. This will make it easier to adjust, and make it easier to rest when you need to.
- Give yourself a day or two with light exercise to acclimate. Avoid going all out your first day at altitude. Consider going for an easy hike, spending time walking around town, or exploring some ski runs that are on the easier side for you to make it easier on your body. Take frequent breaks as well. By taking some time to take in the

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scenery and smell the flowers you'll make it easier on yourself and get to enjoy things you might otherwise skip over.

- Use your humidifier at night to help get to sleep. The moistened air helps make breathing easier and can alleviate dry air related issues commonly associated with Utah's climate.

## **Sun Protection Tips**

Prolonged exposure to sunlight can be dehydrating, and the sun is more intense at higher elevations. By being sun smart you can safely spend all day outside!

- Wear UV-protective clothing. Simply put, having less skin exposed to the sun means having less skin that can get sunburned. Clothing such as long sleeves, pants, and a wide brimmed hat can keep you cool and out of the sun all day.
- Remember to apply sunscreen and reapply sunscreen to all exposed areas of skin. Start the day out with a layer of sunscreen, then every few hours after that.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible. Direct sunlight will zap the moisture from you, so if possible avoid hiking during the hottest parts of the day, or in places with plenty of tree cover or other shade.
- Remember that filtered sun can still send UV rays to damage your skin, so stay sunsmart even on cloudy days.
- Sunlight reflects off of snow, so remember to apply when skiing and snowboarding as well! Sunscreen also helps keep skin hydrated, which can help prevent frostbite on those chilly winter days.