

Tips for Successful Hiking

Bring:

- Sunscreen, hat, sunglasses.
- Snacks: trail bars, nuts, fruit, etc.
- Camera if you wish
- Cell phone
- Tissues, baggie for "trail breaks".
- Insect repellent
- Water bottles
- First Aid: Band-aids, moleskin if you need, Epi pen or other medication if needed
- Water: Always have at least a bottle of water. Drink 1/2 to 1 cup every 30 to 45 minutes. Keep the water coming into your body even if you don't really feel very thirsty. If you are hiking, you are losing moisture and you need to replenish it.
- Snacks: Fruit, bars, nuts, protein

Dress:

- Dress as if the weather is 5 degrees warmer than it is when you leave
- Layers are great
- Best to use quick dry and wicking fabrics (wool, synthetics)
- Bring a rain jacket or poncho – the weather is unpredictable!

Blisters

- Caused by heat, moisture, friction, poor fitting shoes that rub.
- Prevention: Proper fitting shoe with wool or wool/synthetic blend, change socks if they become wet. If you experience a hot spot, stop, inspect, dry, use heavy duty moleskin or paper tape or bandaid.
- Treatment: Puncture blister, leave hood on as protection. Clean with alcohol or Betadine and apply Neosporin and bandaid until the area is dry. Then moisturize

Safety

- Bugs
 - Be alert late July through August
 - There may be annoying gnats or black flies in late summer
 - Bees and yellow jackets build nests in the ground so be mindful of where you are stepping
 - If allergic, bring EpiPen
- Ticks
 - Wear long pants to prevent
 - Check your body after hiking
 - Deer ticks not as common in WNC
 - Remove with a tweezer
- Bears Encounters
 - **Please review the information on this excellent website:** <http://bearwise.org>
 - Bears are generally shy and not aggressive, will usually leave the area if they hear you coming
 - If the bear does not see you, walk quietly away
 - If bear does see you, STOP, back away slowly while facing the bear.
 - Give him room to escape
 - Do not make eye contact
 - Speak in calm monotone and make no sudden movements.

- Try to make yourself appear big
- Do not turn and run
- Snakes
 - Uncommon to see them
 - Tend to be under and around rocks, sunning on the trail and in high grasses
 - Not generally aggressive, give wide berth and walk around
- Poison Ivy:
 - Early spring until fall
 - Looks like a cluster of three leaves at the end of a long stem. Two side leaves smaller than the middle. Leaf is dark and shiny. Turns red in the fall.
 - Roots more potent and you may see furry vines climbing on trees
 - Other plants look similar – “leaves of three let them be.”

Injury Prevention

- Roots, rocks, moss, wet leaves and stones can be hazards
- Stay aware, look down and ahead
- There are more injuries going downhill than up
- Poles can be helpful
- Don't hike alone

Trail Etiquette

Leader is always in front

Sweep is always in the back

Trail breaks

Off trail

Watch for poison ivy

Urinate at least 200 feet from any body of water

Let leader know if the pace is too fast, need a trail break, become ill

Yield to runners, bikers, horses

Leave no trace (food, bags, tissues)

Bring a small bag for trash

Do not pick flowers or plants or take anything from the forest

Stay on the trail.