

Staying *safe* in the mountains, step by step

Obvious risks are linked to the mountains, but if you follow the rules, trekking and alpinism are healthy activities, that bring feelings of freedom and happiness, much more than they are associated with competition or sport. The mountain morphology, with its rocks, snow and ice, as well as its changing weather may become elements of risks if you try to face them without the necessary know-how or preparation: heading up to the mountains requires attention and information, about the environment as well as about yourself.

As human mistakes are quite often at the root of dangerous situations in the mountains, we invite you to read this leaflet carefully.

BEFORE LEAVING:

- Check the local weather forecast (<http://cf.regione.vda.it/>) before planning your route, according to your psycho-physical conditions and your technical abilities ; choose the track more suited to your actual fitness and check its condition; adjust the itinerary to the season (hours of light/day) and remember that, even in summer, you could find snow in the high mountain areas, which may result more difficult to cross;
- Get a map of the paths and make sure you know how to read it;
- Bring along the right gear for your track, an emergency kit and, if necessary, a GPS tracker; take enough drinks and food with you and avoid useless items; choose clothes to wear in layers, so that you can easily adapt your body temperature to the situation;
- Never walk alone and always tell someone (family, friends) where you are going;
- Remember to bring a mobile phone with a full battery charge;
- **Memorize the emergency centre number: 1.1.2.**
- **Learn how to send an audible/visual distress signal:** one signal every ten seconds for one minute, followed by a one minute break;
- **Learn how to signal to a helicopter:**
Standing, arms outstretched to form a "Y" shape = YES, I need help
Standing, one arm stretched up and one down = NO, I don't need help.

www.regione.vda.it
cf.regione.vda.it/previsioni.php
www.ausl.vda.it
www.soccorsoalpinovaldostano.it

DURING THE OUTING:

- Look out for weather changes;
- Make a realistic evaluation of your personal fitness and of that of the rest of your group;
- When climbing or going downhill, remember to set your pace on that of the weakest person in the group;
- Frequently check on your position and on the timetable you have set, taking into account the weather, the track conditions, how tired you feel and the equipment you have;
- Include breaks in your timetable;
- Consider alternative routes and conditions to come back safely;
- Leave a sign of your presence on the register of refuges or bivouacs;
- Always respect the mountain and the people who frequent it;
- Never light a fire in the forest or near a forest;
- Do not litter along your way;
- Respect wild flora and fauna;
- If you brought your dog along, keep him/her on a leash.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

In spite of all your care, an accident may happen: find a safe place and call for help **(1.1.2.)**.

For any emergency call, be prepared to answer the following questions:

- What happened? (someone fell, feels unwell...)
- Where is this person? (coordinates, altitude, local name of the place)
- When did it happen? (how long time ago)
- How many persons are involved?
- What is the weather situation on the spot? (clouds, visibility, wind, precipitations)
- Can a helicopter land on that spot?
- On what phone number can you be called back?

Follow the indications given by the Emergency centre operator.

If you do not manage to call for help, try and reach a place where you can, find a safe place and send an audible/visual distress signal.

An emergency radio network covers the region, the E-frequency.