

# KATE SIELMANN

MOUNTAINEERING & TREKKING TRAINING

*The Lake Louise Score:*

## The Go-To Scoring System to Diagnose Acute Mountain Sickness

*By Kate Sielmann*



## *The Lake Louise Score: The Go-To Scoring System to Diagnose Altitude Mountain Sickness (AMS)*

Hey friend

In the mountaineering and trekking world, we often admire those who can endure the most suffering, who can push through the greatest discomfort and pain to reach the summit. But the problem is, AMS is often mistakenly seen as something to be endured or pushed through, when in fact, it has nothing to do with your tolerance for pain. It's your body's way of signalling that something is seriously wrong.

I'm telling you this from personal experience—an experience I've never repeated since.

**It was my first high-altitude mountain, Kilimanjaro.**

I have to tell you, I cringe just writing this because it was so irresponsible and ridiculous. It's unimaginable now how I convinced myself that I was “fine” and made specific choice because I didn't want to seem weak. During our summit push...

I momentarily forgot where we were, but I brushed it off as just a “blonde” moment.

I actually hallucinated. The tiny lights on the back of my guide's bag looked like shooting stars moving in slow motion with every step... But I was just tired. I puked repeatedly the entire night. But after each wretch, I convinced myself that I felt better.

I had the mother of all headaches. It felt like someone was hitting me repeatedly on the back of my head with a frying pan, but again, I told myself it was all “**part**” of the summit push. Totally normal.

Had I known then what I know now, I would have realised I was well on my way to something much worse than AMS.

Ego or internal judgment has no place in the decision-making process regarding AMS.

That's why I LOVE the Lake Louise Score. It's a quantitative system used to track and score your symptoms, helping you understand where you are on the AMS scale—without any ego or internal judgment.

Your friend and unofficial coach,

Kate

*P.S. If you're new here... Hey, I'm Kate Sielmann*

I'm a sport scientist, author, coach, mountaineer, proud mum to twin girls, soon to be podcast host and en route to my Masters in Sport Psychology & Performance. Welcome to my little slice of PDF goodness entirely focused on helping you get better prepared for your next high altitude adventure.

## *How to Use the Score System*

Go through each symptom and allocate the points in the empty box in the far right column.

For example, if you had a moderate headache, it would count as “2 points” to your overall score.

Add together the individual scores for each symptom to get the total score.

### *Understanding Your Score:*

**3 to 5**      =      **mild AMS**

**6 or more**      =      **severe AMS**

### *Disclaimer*

The information presented in this document is derived from personal experience and research, not medical expertise. For personalised medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment tailored to your specific circumstances, it is strongly recommended to consult a qualified healthcare professional.

Symptom	Severity	Score	
<b>HEADACHE</b>	No headache	0	
	Mild headache	1	
	Moderate headache	2	
	Severe headache, incapacitating	3	
<b>GASTROINTESTINAL SYMPTOMS</b>	None	0	
	Poor appetite or nausea	1	
	Moderate nausea & or vomiting	2	
	Severe nausea & or vomiting	3	
<b>FATIGUE &amp; / or WEAKNESS</b>	Not tired or weak	0	
	Mild fatigue/weakness	1	
	Moderate fatigue/weakness	2	
	Severe fatigue/weakness	3	
<b>DIZZINESS/ LIGHTHEADEDNESS</b>	Not dizzy	0	
	Mild dizziness	1	
	Moderate dizziness	2	
	Severe dizziness, incapacitating	3	
<b>DIFFICULTY SLEEPING</b>	Slept as well as usual	0	
	Did not sleep as well as usual	1	
	Woke many times, poor sleep	2	
	Could not sleep at all	3	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>			

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