



Expedition Medicine & Field Skills - Chamonix

17th – 21st June 2019

Pre-course Dossier v1 (25/2/2019)

Style & overview of the course

Welcome to this exciting course. This note will help you prepare. We're continuing with a revised dossier format – less detail with clear advice and more information/documents as downloads on the course web page and references to external web pages.

This note tells you **what you need to know, do and pack to prepare**. Please read it now (before emailing your questions). This note does not aim to provide general Chamonix information that you can easily find with the power of Google (such as websites www.chamonix.com or www.chamonix.net).

See the **DOWNLOADS** section on the course web page to access this document and others as they become available. <http://wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk/medics-series-courses/expedition-medicine-field-skills-in-chamonix-summer-2/>

This is an expedition medical training course and the style of the week reflects this; it's fun, practical and hands on. We expect your full participation.

Typically, this course is attended by junior doctors along with more senior medics, and a few medical students, nurses, paramedics and OHPs. Increasingly delegates are from across Europe and further afield but the majority are British. The instructors are expert and approachable. It's a busy week with little "free" time (for you and the teaching team).

The lecture venue is very comfortable (though not air conditioned) and in the town centre. We run some outdoor practical sessions further down the valley at a forested lakeside park at the Gaillard climbing crag. Later in the week, once we are high in the mountains on the overnight bivouac, there are no "services" like toilets or piped water.

Expedition Medicine & Field Skills – Pre-course Dossier v1

Bivouac means to sleep under the stars but best to bring a lightweight personal tent in case of rain. On the final day (Friday), we will go on mountain walks in small groups to appreciate the natural history of the area. For the keenest, we offer an optional day of glacier trekking and ice climbing on Friday (so you'll miss the guided walk) **or** Saturday. Many delegates arrive the weekend before or stay for the following weekend to enjoy Chamonix. We are sometimes very weather dependent and can chop and change the programme so don't make other social plans or arrangements during the course week in case there is a programme change, especially if you plan to visit with family or friends not on the course.

Course programme

Please see the webpage for an outline programme.

WMT teaching team

Please see the webpage for details of the teaching team.

Fitness to participate – declaration form

You will be required to submit a “**participant declaration**” form on arrival. Download it from the course web page now please and contact us immediately if you have anything to disclose such as any serious medical condition so we have time to approve your participation.

Insurance

Insure yourself for this trip now! Make sure you are insured for the activities included and others you plan to undertake. You must be covered to attend the optional glacier day (see below) and insured for "glacier trekking/walking with a guide up to 2000m".

Check if your insurer considers this course a “work” trip which they might not cover. Most “free” travel insurance you get with a credit card do not include “hazardous activities”. WMT will not advance funds or make any financial guarantees on your behalf to facilitate your rescue, medical treatment or repatriation. You must take out travel insurance now and be sure it covers the course fee, flights, accommodation etc. should you need to cancel. <http://www.snowcard.co.uk/> (for UK residents only) understands the needs of mountain travellers.

Recommended reading

Download the pre-course reading bundle from the course web page.

Changed your email address?

Tell us or you won't get updates!

Receipts

Please download your receipt now from your initial confirmation email. There are not available on our server indefinitely.

Expedition Medicine & Field Skills – Pre-course Dossier v1

Paying the course fee balance

Please promptly pay any balance of course fees when you are requested to via the automated database.

Facebook event

Join this course on FB and use it as a pre-course forum to arrange accommodation together (WMT has to approve posts)

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1698581670264368/>

Flights

Fly to Geneva.

Airport transfers

Book door to door transfers through our reliable partners Chamonix Valley Transfers via this dedicated link: <http://wilderness.cvt.ski/transfers/>

Other transfer options: <http://www.chamonix.net/english/transport/transfers.htm>

Accommodation

Book this for the duration of the course even though we hope to be sleeping up the mountain one night. Don't book outlying accommodation such as in Les Houches which is cheaper but difficult to get to central Chamonix from. Be advised to stay within at most 15-minute walking distance of the Chamonix town centre/course venue.

Hostels

www.gitevagabond.com

www.hostelbookers.com to search for other hostels including the Hostel-Chalet-Gite Chamoniard Volent

Private apartment/chalet hire

By far this seems to be a growing and popular accommodation option for our winter and summer course students.

www.holiday-rentals.co.uk

www.myfrenchchalet.com

and Air BnB of course

Camping – close to the town centre

<http://www.chamonix.net/english/accommodation/camping-1-2-star>

Registration & venue – Salle du Bicentenaire – start time

This will take place at 9.00am Monday at the Salle du Bicentenaire lecture theatre BESIDE THE MUSEE ALPIN (Alpine Museum) on 89 avenue Michel Croz in the pedestrian zone near the river. The course starts at 9.15. See this link for a town centre map: <http://world.chamonix.com/PDF/chamVille.gif>. The venue is clearly marked in GR 20F.

Expedition Medicine & Field Skills – Pre-course Dossier v1

Extra costs - cable cars: there will be an additional cost to you for cable car access for the bivouac and this depends on which one we use. Budget up to €25. Some of the Friday mountain walks involve a cable car ride that you pay for but there are always options offered that only involve a cheap or free train or bus ride and no cable car.

What you must bring

- head torch
- warm hat
- thermals/fleece layers
- waterproof jacket and trousers (unpadded ski pants are fine)
- thin gloves
- thick gloves or mitts (for working in the snow)
- sun glasses
- sun hat
- water bottle/bladder
- sun block/insect repellent
- gaiters, if you have them, for snow training (or spare socks!)
- insurance details/cash/credit card
- lightweight duvet jacket or vest if you have one
- sleeping bag (synthetic fill is best)
- foam camping mattress (cheap) or an inflatable Thermarest (much more expensive)
- emergency bivy bag (see below) or tent
- lightweight tent – such as a really cheap “festival” tent
- large rucksack (it needs to be big enough to carry your overnight kit and some group kit or food without looking like a Christmas tree with bits tied on)
- smaller daypack (20-30 litres) for day to day use/glacier trekking
- trekking shoes or boots (not just trainers)
- cutlery/plastic bowl & cup (pots, stoves and fuel is provided)
- several large bin liners for waterproofing your kit
- personal meds, toiletries, towel
- antiseptic hand gel
- trekking poles (if you have them)

**Long-life Gore-tex bags are very expensive but these are two cheaper reusable options, though they are less robust than a proper bivy bag:

Hunka bivy bag - £30 <https://www.alpkit.com/products/hunka>

Heatsheets emergency bivy - £16

<http://www.backpackinglight.co.uk/practical/VE104.htm>

Friday 21st June and Saturday 22nd June - Optional Session - Essential mountain travel and glacier skills - €140

This full day out is always very popular and normally half of all delegates take part. It's the same programme each day. We'll offer it also on Friday for those who need to leave early (min. 6 participants). With internationally qualified mountain guides you will access the Mer de Glace (the glacier at the bottom of the Vallee Blanche – no snow cover in June) by mountain railway to get a taste of the essentials of safe glacier travel including skills not covered previously on the course including:

- More rope work
- Use of crampons and ice axe
- Ice anchors
- Ice climbing on a top rope on crevasse walls (not winter ice climbing up waterfalls which will get insurance companies very excited so don't mention it)
- Crevasse rescue

No prior experience is required although you need to be moderately fit and properly dressed to enjoy the day (and you will be out all day whatever the weather and temperature!). All technical kit (axes, crampons, harness, helmets) and mountain boots is provided. It's a taster day so won't appeal to experienced alpinists. The train fare is also included in the fee. Remember, we cannot control the weather, train schedules etc. If for any reason we cannot offer the specific activity as described, relevant mountain instruction will still be given somewhere to the best of the guide's ability. For insurance purposes, you are going glacier trekking with a IFMGA high mountain guide to 2000m. The latest you will return to town is 5pm. It's not possible to return earlier unsupervised if you need to be back earlier to fly home.

We will email you a few weeks before the course to canvass interest so we can line up enough guides. You confirm and pay (in cash only) on day 1 of the course.

CPD credits

We estimate this course is valid for at least 30 CPD credits.

Weather reports

Check out www.chamonix.com for the latest forecast nearer to the time.

Carte d'Hôte (guest card)

This is a tourist card that allows you to travel freely on the public buses and local trains. You should be provided with one if you are paying tourist tax at a chalet or hotel, although you frequently have to ask for it.

Chamonix shop hours

Most shops are open every day until 7pm but some still close for lunch.

WMT emergency contact telephone during the course & WhatsApp group

Barry's UK mobile is +44 7967 032930 for emergencies only. Put this number in your 'phone now. We'll set up a WhatsApp group nearer the time.

Follow our advice!

By far the three main omissions delegates make is not sorting travel insurance as soon as they book, not adhering to the kit list (or asking questions in good time) and not booking accommodation close to central Chamonix.

Questions?

We welcome questions so that you are prepared but if we've already provided the information you're seeking, I'm afraid your email will not be answered.

We look forward to working with you soon in Chamonix.

Barry Roberts

WMT Commercial Director

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