

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Hygiene Guide.

How Go Kilimanjaro Treks keeps climbers healthy on the mountain: private toilets, hand-washing, hot showers, safe water and a dedicated hygiene team.

TOILETS | HAND HYGIENE | HOT SHOWERS | SAFE WATER

GO KILIMANJARO TREKS

COMPREHENSIVE HYGIENE & CLEANLINESS BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

Essential Cleanliness Standards for Your Mount Kilimanjaro Trek

Introduction: The Importance of Cleanliness on Mount Kilimanjaro

Proper hygiene and cleanliness are fundamental to your health, comfort, and safety during your Mount Kilimanjaro expedition. The remote mountain environment, extreme weather conditions, and physical demands of climbing create unique challenges for maintaining cleanliness. At Go Kilimanjaro Treks, we have developed comprehensive best practices and protocols to ensure that all trekkers maintain the highest standards of personal hygiene and sanitation throughout the expedition. This guide provides detailed information about our facilities, services, and the best practices you must follow to stay clean and healthy on the mountain.

TOILET HYGIENE & BEST PRACTICES

Understanding Our Toilet Facilities

Go Kilimanjaro Treks provides private, portable chemical toilets housed in dedicated privacy tents. We maintain a strict ratio of one toilet facility for every three trekkers. These facilities are essential to maintaining sanitation on the mountain, where natural waste disposal is not an option.

Best Practices for Using Toilet Facilities

Before Using the Toilet: Always use hand sanitizer or wash your hands before entering the toilet tent. This prevents you from contaminating the toilet seat and handle. Inspect the toilet seat and surrounding area for cleanliness before use. If the seat appears dirty, use a toilet seat cover or wipe it clean with provided toilet paper or wet wipes.

Proper Toilet Seat Use: Always sit on the toilet seat properly. Do not stand on the seat, as this can damage the portable toilet and create unsanitary conditions. Ensure you are seated securely before using the facility. Never throw anything other than toilet paper into the toilet, as this can clog the system and create maintenance problems.

Toilet Paper Disposal: All used toilet paper must be placed directly into the toilet bowl. Do not leave toilet paper on the seat or floor. If the toilet becomes clogged, immediately inform a Toilet Helper. Never attempt to fix a clogged toilet yourself.

Feminine Hygiene Product Disposal: Used feminine hygiene products must NEVER be flushed down the toilet, as they will clog the system. Instead, place them in small opaque ziplock bags and dispose of them in the designated trash bags provided at camp. This is critical for maintaining the functionality of our toilet facilities.

Vomit or Diarrhea: If you experience vomiting or diarrhea, use the toilet facility immediately. Do not use the toilet tent floor or surrounding areas. After use, immediately wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if water is not available. Inform a guide if you experience persistent gastrointestinal issues.

Cleaning After Use: After using the toilet, wipe the seat and surrounding area with toilet paper to remove any residue. If the seat is visibly soiled, use a wet wipe to clean it thoroughly. Always leave the toilet facility clean for

the next person. Flush the toilet by pouring water into the bowl as directed by signage in the tent.

Hand Washing After Toilet Use: This is the most critical step. Immediately after leaving the toilet, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water using the provided wash basins. If water is not immediately available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) until you can wash with soap and water. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, ensuring you clean between fingers, under nails, and around wrists.

Avoiding Contamination: Do not touch your face, mouth, or eyes before washing your hands after toilet use. Do not handle food or eating utensils with unwashed hands. Do not touch other trekkers or shared items until your hands are clean. This prevents the spread of gastrointestinal illnesses and infections.

Toilet Facility Maintenance by Our Team

Our specialized Toilet Helpers maintain all facilities according to strict protocols:

- Toilets are cleaned and sanitized with eco-friendly chemical disinfectants multiple times daily
- Toilet paper is restocked continuously to ensure availability
- Hand sanitizer stations are maintained and refilled regularly
- The toilet tent floor is swept and cleaned daily
- Any maintenance issues are addressed immediately
- Odor control measures are implemented to maintain comfort

HAND HYGIENE & SANITATION

Why Hand Hygiene is Critical

Your hands are the primary vehicle for transmitting germs and bacteria. On Mount Kilimanjaro, where medical facilities are distant and gastrointestinal illnesses can quickly escalate, proper hand hygiene is absolutely essential. Most illnesses on the mountain are preventable through rigorous hand washing practices.

When to Wash Your Hands

You must wash or sanitize your hands at the following times:

- Immediately after using the toilet facility (most critical)
- Before every meal or snack
- Before preparing or handling food
- Before eating with your hands or touching your mouth
- After arriving at camp and before touching communal items
- After handling dirty gear or clothing
- After touching animals or insects
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- Before and after helping an ill trekker
- Before touching your face, eyes, or mouth

Proper Hand Washing Technique

Follow these steps for effective hand washing:

Step 1 - Wet Your Hands: Use clean, running water (from the provided wash basins). The water should be as warm as possible, as warm water is more effective at removing germs.

Step 2 - Apply Soap: Apply antibacterial soap generously to your hands. We provide soap at all wash stations.

Step 3 - Scrub Thoroughly: Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds. Make sure to scrub the palms of both hands, the backs of both hands, between your fingers, under your fingernails, and your wrists.

Step 4 - Rinse Thoroughly: Rinse your hands completely under clean, running water until all soap is removed. Residual soap can cause irritation.

Step 5 - Dry Your Hands: Dry your hands using a clean towel or allow them to air dry. Do not wipe your hands on your clothing or dirty surfaces.

Hand Sanitizer Use

When soap and water are not immediately available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

Sanitizer Requirements: Use only hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content. Apply enough sanitizer to cover all surfaces of your hands.

Application Technique: Rub the sanitizer over all surfaces of your hands, including between fingers, under nails, and wrists, until your hands are completely dry (usually 20-30 seconds).

Important Limitation: Hand sanitizer is NOT a replacement for soap and water. It is only a temporary measure when washing facilities are not available. Always wash your hands with soap and water as soon as possible after using sanitizer.

PERSONAL BODY CLEANLINESS

Daily Washing Routine

Maintaining daily body cleanliness prevents skin infections, irritation, and discomfort on the mountain.

Morning Wash: Upon waking at each camp, use the provided wash basins to wash your face, neck, underarms, and hands. This removes dust and sweat accumulated overnight and prepares you for the day's trek.

Evening Wash: Upon arriving at the next camp, wash your entire body using the provided wash basins and warm water. Pay special attention to areas prone to sweat and dirt accumulation: face, neck, underarms, groin area, and feet. Use antibacterial soap for thorough cleaning.

Wet Wipe Cleaning: If wash basins are not available or water is limited, use biodegradable wet wipes to clean your body. Wipe your face, neck, underarms, and other areas prone to sweat. This removes dust and sweat buildup and helps prevent skin irritation.

Hot Shower Service

At lower base camps (excluding the final base camp before the summit), we offer hot shower service upon request:

Shower Availability: Showers are available in the afternoon/evening at lower altitude camps. Inform your guide if you wish to use the shower service.

Shower Setup: Each shower is provided in a private shower tent with hot water, soap, a clean towel, and sandals. This is an excellent opportunity to thoroughly clean yourself.

Shower Best Practices: Use warm (not excessively hot) water to avoid drying out your skin. Wash your entire body thoroughly with soap. Pay special attention to feet, underarms, and groin areas. Rinse completely to remove all soap. Dry yourself thoroughly with the provided towel.

Foot Care & Hygiene

Proper foot care is critical to preventing blisters, fungal infections, and other foot problems that can compromise your trek.

Daily Foot Washing: Wash your feet thoroughly every evening using the provided wash basins. Use warm water and antibacterial soap. Scrub between your toes and under your toenails to remove dirt and bacteria.

Foot Drying: Dry your feet completely, especially between your toes. Moisture between toes can lead to fungal infections. Use a clean towel and ensure your feet are completely dry before putting on socks or shoes.

Toenail Care: Keep your toenails clean and trimmed short. Dirty or long toenails can harbor bacteria and cause infection. If you notice any signs of fungal infection (discoloration, thickening, or crumbling), inform your guide immediately.

Foot Powder Application: If you are prone to sweaty feet, apply foot powder after drying your feet thoroughly. This helps prevent fungal infections and keeps your feet dry.

Clean Socks: Change into clean, dry socks at least once daily, preferably in the evening. Wear clean socks to bed. Dirty or damp socks promote fungal infections and blisters.

Skin Care & Hygiene

The mountain environment is harsh on skin due to intense sun, dry air, and dust.

Daily Skin Cleaning: Wash your face and exposed skin daily with soap and water. Remove dust and sweat that accumulate during trekking.

Sunscreen Application: Apply sunscreen (SPF 50+) to all exposed skin every morning and reapply after sweating or washing. The sun's rays are intense at high altitude and can cause severe sunburn.

Moisturizing: The dry mountain air causes skin to become dry and irritated. Apply moisturizing lotion to your face and body daily, especially after washing. This prevents cracking and irritation.

Lip Care: Apply lip balm with high SPF protection regularly throughout the day. The intense sun and dry air cause severe chapping. Reapply after eating or drinking.

Preventing Skin Infections: Do not scratch insect bites or minor cuts. Keep any wounds clean and covered. If you develop a rash or skin infection, inform your guide immediately.

FOOD SAFETY & EATING HYGIENE

Kitchen Hygiene Standards

All meals are prepared in a dedicated kitchen tent under strict food safety protocols. Our cooks follow rigorous hygiene standards to prevent food contamination and foodborne illnesses.

Our kitchen tent is exclusively for food preparation and is strictly prohibited for sleeping by the porters. Only the chef and waiter are permitted to sleep beside our well-protected food to ensure optimal safety and cleanliness.

Hot water for washing is always available. Additionally, if your climb is booked with hot shower services, hot water for your shower is just one call away.

Dishwashing & Utensil Sanitation

All food utensils, plates, bowls, and cookware undergo a rigorous three-step cleaning process:

Step 1 - Hot Soapy Wash: All items are washed in hot water with antibacterial dish soap. This removes food residue and kills most bacteria.

Step 2 - Clean Water Rinse: Items are rinsed thoroughly in clean water to remove all soap residue. Soap residue can cause gastrointestinal upset.

Step 3 - Sanitizing Dip: All items are dipped in a food-safe sanitizing solution to eliminate any remaining pathogens. This final step ensures complete sanitation.

Air Drying: All items are air-dried in a dust-free environment before being stored or used again. Items are never wiped with dirty cloths.

Drinking Water Safety

Safe drinking water is provided at every camp:

Water Treatment Process: All water is sourced from mountain streams and undergoes multiple treatment steps: filtration to remove particulates, boiling to kill bacteria and viruses, and chemical treatment with water purification tablets for additional safety.

Water Containers: Drinking water is stored in clean, dedicated containers. Never drink from untreated water sources, streams, or lakes, even if they appear clean.

Personal Water Bottles: Keep your personal water bottle clean. Rinse it daily with treated water and allow it to air dry. Do not share water bottles with other trekkers.

Eating Hygiene Best Practices

Hand Washing Before Meals: Always wash your hands with soap and water before eating. If water is not available, use hand sanitizer. This is critical to preventing gastrointestinal illnesses.

Using Clean Utensils: Always use the clean utensils provided by our team. Do not use dirty utensils or utensils that have touched the ground.

Eating Practices: Eat only food prepared by our cooks. Do not eat food that has been left exposed or that you are unsure about. Avoid touching food with your hands; use utensils instead.

Sharing Food: Do not share food, utensils, or water bottles with other trekkers. This prevents the spread of illnesses and infections.

CAMP CLEANLINESS

Camping Master Responsibilities

Our Camping Masters play a crucial role in ensuring your comfort, safety, and hygiene throughout the trek. They arrive at the campsite hours ahead of your group to select the most picturesque location, strategically situated at a distance from other hiking groups to ensure privacy and tranquility.

During dinner time, they keep a close eye on the tents to ensure the security of your belongings while you are away.

To support your daily hygiene needs, they set up a hand wash stand providing hot water on a daily basis, allowing you to maintain cleanliness even in the remote mountain environment.

Additionally, Camping Masters are equipped with an emergency tent repair kit. In the event of unexpected damage to your tent due to harsh weather or wear, they can quickly perform necessary repairs to ensure your shelter remains secure and weatherproof.

Sleeping Tent Cleanliness

Your sleeping tent is your personal space. Keeping it clean is essential for your comfort and health.

Daily Tent Cleaning: Our Camping Masters clean and maintain all sleeping tents daily. Tents are thoroughly swept to remove dust and debris, aired out to prevent moisture accumulation, and dusted using specialized microfiber towels.

Personal Tent Hygiene: Keep your personal sleeping area clean. Remove dirt and dust from your gear before placing it in the tent. Do not eat in your tent, as this attracts insects and creates mess. Keep your sleeping bag clean by using a sleeping bag liner.

Sleeping Bag Protection: Use the plastic bags we provide to protect your sleeping bag from dust and moisture during transit. Sleep inside a sleeping bag liner if you have one, which can be washed more easily than the sleeping bag itself.

Gear & Equipment Cleanliness

Proper gear care maintains hygiene and extends equipment life.

Protective Groundsheets: Large waterproof groundsheets are deployed at camps to provide a clean, dry surface for your duffel bags and daypacks. This prevents direct contact with mud, dust, and moisture.

Gear Protection Bags: We provide heavy-duty plastic bags to protect your gear from moisture and dust. Use these to encase your sleeping bags, mattresses, and other items during transit between camps.

Clothing Care: Keep dirty clothing separate from clean clothing. Store clean clothes in plastic bags to protect them from dust. Change into clean clothes for sleeping.

Waste Management & Trash Disposal

Proper waste management is critical to environmental protection and camp hygiene.

Trash Collection: Heavy-duty trash bags are available at every camp for waste collection. Place all trash, including organic waste, in these bags.

Feminine Hygiene Product Disposal: Used feminine hygiene products must be placed in small opaque ziplock bags and disposed of in the camp trash bags. Never flush them down the toilet.

Trash Transport: All trash is securely bagged and transported down the mountain by our team for proper disposal at designated facilities. We adhere strictly to Leave No Trace principles.

Personal Responsibility: Do not litter. Place all trash in designated bags. Do not leave any waste at camp or on the trail.

CLOTHING & SLEEPING GEAR HYGIENE

Daily Clothing Changes

Changing into clean clothing daily is essential for hygiene and comfort.

Clean Undergarments: Change into clean undergarments every day. Dirty undergarments promote fungal infections and skin irritation.

Clean Socks: Change into clean, dry socks at least once daily, preferably in the evening. Wear clean socks to bed. This prevents blisters and fungal infections.

Sleep Clothing: Sleep in clean clothes. Change into clean undergarments and socks before bed. This ensures you sleep in a hygienic environment.

Sleeping Bag Hygiene

Your sleeping bag is your most personal piece of equipment. Keep it clean.

Sleeping Bag Liners: If you have a sleeping bag liner, use it. It protects your sleeping bag from dirt and sweat and can be washed more easily than the sleeping bag itself.

Sleeping Bag Protection: Use the plastic bags we provide to protect your sleeping bag from dust and moisture during transit. Store your sleeping bag in a clean, dry location at camp.

Sleeping Bag Maintenance: Do not eat in your sleeping bag. Do not use your sleeping bag as a seat or backrest. Keep your sleeping bag reserved for sleeping only.

RESPIRATORY & NASAL HYGIENE

Nasal Care in Dry Mountain Air

The cold, dry mountain air irritates nasal passages and can cause discomfort and nosebleeds.

Nasal Moisturization: Use a saline nasal spray regularly to keep your nasal passages moisturized. This prevents irritation, cracking, and nosebleeds. Apply spray 2-3 times daily or as needed.

Vaseline Application: Apply a small amount of Vaseline inside your nostrils to create a protective barrier. This prevents moisture loss and irritation.

Avoiding Nosebleeds: Do not blow your nose forcefully. Gently wipe your nose with a clean tissue. If you experience nosebleeds, tilt your head forward and apply gentle pressure to your nose for 10 minutes.

Cough & Respiratory Hygiene

The mountain environment can cause respiratory irritation and coughing.

Coughing Etiquette: When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands). Dispose of used tissues in trash bags. Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.

Preventing Spread of Illness: If you are ill with a cough or cold, maintain distance from other trekkers to prevent spreading illness. Wash your hands frequently and cover your mouth when coughing.

FEMININE HYGIENE

Menstrual Management on the Mountain

The physical stress and environmental changes of trekking can affect menstrual cycles. Female trekkers should be prepared.

Bringing Adequate Supplies: Bring more feminine hygiene products than you anticipate needing. Pack pads, tampons, or other products you prefer. The mountain environment and physical stress can trigger unexpected periods.

Product Disposal: Used feminine hygiene products must NEVER be flushed down the toilet. Place them in small opaque ziplock bags and dispose of them in the designated trash bags provided at camp. This is critical for maintaining toilet functionality.

Privacy & Discretion: We respect your privacy. Use opaque bags for discreet disposal. Our team is trained to handle all waste respectfully.

Washing & Hygiene: Wash your genital area daily using the provided wash basins. Change your pad or tampon regularly. Maintain proper hygiene to prevent infections.

PREVENTING ILLNESS THROUGH CLEANLINESS

Common Illnesses Prevented by Good Hygiene

Most illnesses on Mount Kilimanjaro are preventable through rigorous hygiene practices:

- Gastrointestinal illnesses (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting) - prevented by hand hygiene and food safety
- Respiratory infections - prevented by respiratory hygiene and nasal care
- Skin infections and fungal infections - prevented by daily washing and foot care
- Urinary tract infections - prevented by genital hygiene and proper clothing care
- Eye infections - prevented by not touching eyes with dirty hands

Signs of Poor Hygiene & When to Seek Help

If you notice any of the following signs, inform your guide immediately:

- Persistent diarrhea or vomiting
- Skin rashes or infections

- Respiratory symptoms or persistent cough
- Eye redness or discharge
- Urinary symptoms or pain
- Fever or chills

ESSENTIAL HYGIENE PACKING LIST

To ensure you are fully prepared to maintain hygiene throughout your trek, please include the following items in your packing list:

- Biodegradable wet wipes (3-4 packs)
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (2-3 small bottles, 60% alcohol or higher)
- Toothbrush and travel-sized toothpaste
- Small, quick-dry microfiber towel
- Lip balm with high SPF protection (at least SPF 30)
- Sunscreen (SPF 50+)
- Moisturizing lotion or Vaseline (for dry skin and nasal passages)
- Saline nasal spray
- Foot powder (optional but highly recommended)
- Extra pairs of clean socks (at least 5-6 pairs)
- Extra pairs of clean undergarments (at least 5-6 pairs)
- Feminine hygiene products and opaque disposal bags (for female trekkers)
- Personal first-aid kit with blister plasters, antibiotic ointment, and personal medications
- Small opaque ziplock bags (for discreet waste disposal)
- Sleeping bag liner (highly recommended)

OUR DEDICATED HYGIENE TEAM

Our team is trained and committed to maintaining the highest hygiene standards throughout your expedition. Each team member has specific responsibilities:

Camping Masters: Responsible for camp organization, setup, daily tent cleaning, and maintenance. They select picturesque and private campsites, secure belongings during dinner, provide daily hot water hand wash stands, and carry emergency tent repair kits to handle unexpected damage.

Cooks: Prepare all meals under strict food safety and hygiene protocols. They maintain a clean kitchen tent and follow rigorous food preparation standards.

Toilet Helpers: Dedicated entirely to the continuous maintenance, cleaning, sanitization, and restocking of all toilet facilities. They ensure toilets remain hygienic, odor-free, and fully functional throughout the expedition.

Dishwashers: Ensure all food utensils, plates, bowls, and cookware are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized following the rigorous three-step process. They maintain the highest standards of sanitation in food preparation and serving.

Go Kilimanjaro Treks

Climb Clean • Stay Healthy • Reach the Summit

Ready to Climb?

Nelson responds personally to every enquiry within 24 hours. Send your dates and any questions to info@gokilimanjarotreks.com, call **+255 677 917 500**, or message on WhatsApp.