



A NEARLY DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCE

Altitude that thrills but kills

Abhijeet Gorhe, MBBS CCRP

INTERNATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE NURSES SYMPOSIUM

UCDAVIS
HEALTH SYSTEM



CHILDHOOD DREAM COME TRUE

Mountaineering has always been my passion, so the flyer for “The Trek to Khumbu Himal” was a traveler’s paradise for me. It got all kinds of crazy plans in my head.



On the Way...

As with any overseas trip there were many inconveniences such as:

- Procuring a VISA
- Funds
- Plane Travel
- Training



LUKLA

After carrying our luggage at 9000 feet above sea level, we got our first taste of the thin mountain air and local dusty trails, but I had no idea what was about to come. We hiked to Ramjung, where we got the first glimpse of a mountain village.



Ramjung

Though the trek was difficult, I was experiencing more foot pain than expected, so we messaged Kathmandu to send pain medication. Dr. Nanji recommended taping the ankle and turning back, but I was determined to reach base camp.



Namche Bazaar

Our next stop was a village called Namche Bazaar which houses the highest market (aka bazaar) in the world at 12,000 feet above sea level. Civil and army museums, renowned sherpas, and the home of Sir Edmund Hillary were all included in this village. This is where I began to feel the effects of acute mountain sickness.



Walk to Khumjung

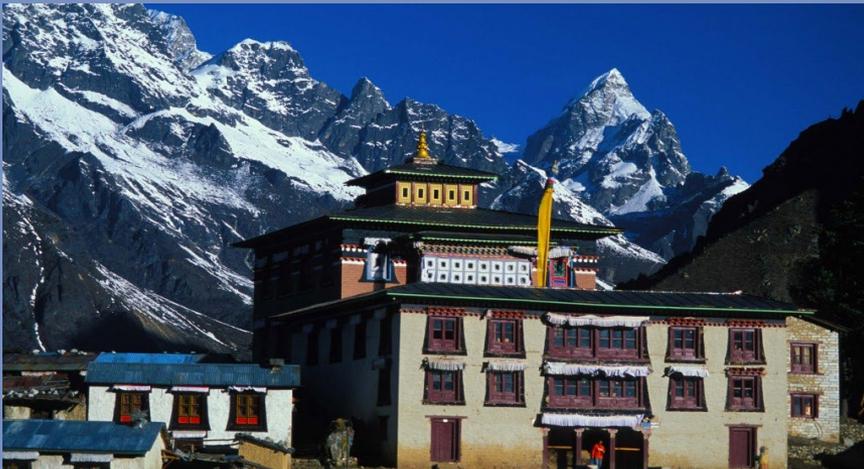
On our slow and short ascent to Khumjung, we had our first glimpse of Mt. Ama Dablam, Everest and Lhotse.

We met David Brashear and heard stories about his illustrious mountaineering career. I had a good appetite and felt well rested.



Gaining Altitude and the first glimpse of Thyangboche

Day 4, the destination was Thyangboche where I started losing my appetite and felt the effects of altitude sickness. My goal was to acclimatize by walking up to higher elevation and get plenty of rest and warm fluids.



Dingboche the destination for rescue operation

On this day the effects of altitude took their toll...



Eventually my condition deteriorated to the point where I had to be airlifted in a rescue helicopter.



Descent to Lukla



- At 9000 feet I waited to be airlifted by another helicopter which would take me to Kathmandu airport.
- The CIWEC hospital had an ambulance at the airport, staffed with a nurse.



Hospitalization and Recovery

- I was taken to the CIWEC hospital which specializes in treating patients with high altitude sickness.
- HAPO and HACO
- 3 days in ICU, and 3 days on the floor after which I was released.
- The recovery continued at the hotel where I was waiting for my team members to arrive.
- I was cleared for international air travel 5 days after my release.



THANK YOU

