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IMS - International Mountain Summit

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Truth against false myths

The IMS Medicine Camp in Bressanone brings together top mountain medicine experts to answer some controversial questions.

For the first time, high-altitude medicine and scientific researchers will meet with the public at Bressanone at the International Mountain Summit

From 12th to 14th October 2017 during the **International Mountain Summit** in Bressanone, top experts in mountain medicine will meet to discuss and raise awareness of the importance of altitude acclimatisation to avoid potentially serious health risks which can affect the general public, professional climbers, mountaineers and mountain lovers. Almost anyone can suffer from altitude sickness if they go too high, too quickly. Whether you are trekking in Nepal, practicing high altitude climbing or skiing in the Dolomites, altitude acclimatisation is the key to avoid diseases linked to high altitude. A slow ascension to high altitudes is the key to acclimatising well. This 3-day program is a unique opportunity to meet, discuss and experience topics and issues related to the field of mountain medicine.

Drugs are commonly used in the mountains for prophylaxis of high altitude symptoms, for the treatment of the disease itself and often to improve physical performance by removing the pain. When can their use in the mountains be considered inappropriate? In recent years, the use of drugs for non-therapeutic purposes has become more frequent, so much so that it has been reported that 90% of mountaineers attempting to scale Mount Everest take drugs to prevent high altitude disease and to compensate for insufficient acclimation. Unfortunately this phenomenon is also present every weekend with climbers wishing to conquer mountain peaks which are more accessible than Everest but which still require high altitude acclimatisation. In order to ascend the peak in the least possible time in order to “show off” their sport performance with friends and acquaintances with that all important selfie, climbers are self medicating often without understanding the potentially serious consequences.

Understanding how to avoid improper use of drugs and learning more about the factors that cause high altitude sickness is essential in order to dispel the myths and beliefs that are widely spread on the internet. **Luigi Festi**, general and chest surgeon in Varese, President of the Central Medical Commission of CAI and director and creator of the Master in Mountain Emergency Medicine and Master in Mountain Expedition Medicine, will join **Peter Hackett**, one of the world's top experts of high altitude and pioneer in scientific research, as well as Director of the Institute for Altitude Medicine of Colorado, at a gathering of the world's leading experts in this field in a conference on Friday 13th October. One of the goals of the conference is to compare mountain medicine and to make the findings of scientific research both available and accessible to the non medical but mountain loving general public.

The support of the **General Presidency of the Italian Alpine Club** and Bolzano **EURAC** with **Hermann Brugger**, Director of the Mountain Emergency Medicine Institute and President of the International Society Mountain Medicine, will provide an additional opportunity for the public to integrate with



leaders in international academia. The scientific and educational level of the **IMS Medicine Camp** days will be further raised by a joint conference between the two Italian and Austrian mountain medicine companies on the morning of 13th October, which will be concluded by a lectio magistralis by **Erik R. Swenson**, professor of medicine, physiology and biophysics at the University of Washington, Seattle, and one of the leading experts in high altitude pulmonary edema.

Thanks to the IMS organization, this three-day Medicine Camp will create a unique opportunity for dialogue and knowledge uniting the public with mountain medicine experts.

The International Mountain Summit is supported by the umbrella brand Südtirol, KIKU, Sparkasse, Pircher, Sparkasse Foundation, Bressanone and the Trentino / South Tyrol region.

More information and the full program on www.ims.bz