



AAC Publications

Failure to Self-Arrest

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Middle Teton

At approximately 1:18 p.m. on July 24, Teton Interagency Dispatch Center received a call from a group of 20 hikers that had summited the Middle Teton and were descending the South Fork of Garnet Canyon. The caller reported that a 25-year-old female member of their group had fallen on snow, slid into rocks, cut her head, and punctured her right hip. The patient had an ice axe but was unable to self-arrest. She had a climbing helmet but was not wearing it at the time of the fall.

A helicopter reconnaissance located the patient, near the granite slabs at the top of the Cave Couloir, and ranger Tyson and Teton helitack Stull were delivered to an unimproved landing zone approximately 100 meters away. Tyson and Stull administered first aid to the patient and recommended a short-haul evacuation. Tyson and the patient were short-hauled by helicopter 38HX to Lupine Meadows. (Source: National Park Service Search and Rescue Report.)

ANALYSIS

Nearly every year, climbers and mountain hikers are injured in falls on hard snow in Garnet Canyon. Practice self-arrest and do not attempt to descend steep snowfields unless you are certain the snow is soft enough to travel safely. Keep your helmet on until you reach the trail, as protection against tumbling falls on snow and in talus. You have to carry it anyway—why not carry it on your head?

(Source: The Editors.)

Images

Article Details

Author	National Park Service Search and Rescue
Publication	ANAM
Volume	11
Issue	70
Page	104
Copyright Date	2017
Article Type	Accident reports