



AAC Publications

Fall in Camp

Alaska, Denali, West Buttress

On June 17, a guided 26-year-old female climber injured her right knee after slipping and falling on icy snow in the group's kitchen tent. This climber had injured this knee previously, and an assessment by NPS medical providers confirmed her knee was unusable because of the injury. Without the possibility of bearing weight, the patient was evacuated to Talkeetna by helicopter from 11,200-foot camp.

ANALYSIS

The NPS rangers see a handful of expeditions each season cut short due to injuries that occur during the non-climbing moments of a trip. **This accident highlights the need for safe footwear and solid footwork, regardless of the activity.** (Source: Denali Mountaineering Rangers.)

DANGEROUS BOOTIES: This climber reportedly was wearing "camp shoes" when she slipped on the icy snow. Most Denali climbers wear various styles of warm booties while resting in camp. In 1993, a climber low on the West Buttress route slipped while descending icy steps into the team's cooking area while wearing down booties and injured his ankle. In 1977, a climber on Mt. Rainier slipped in his booties at camp and fell about 2,000 feet, sustaining serious injuries. Some booties have soles with good traction, but if not they should be improved by gluing carpet scraps or other traction to the soles.

Images

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