



# Camp Menogyn

## Camp Handbook Summer 2026

[www.campmenogyn.org](http://www.campmenogyn.org)

**Summer Mailing Address:**

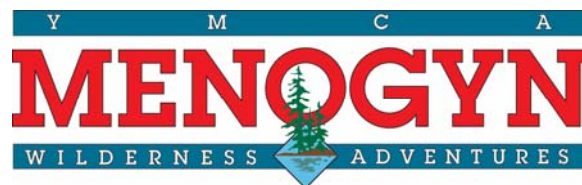
YMCA Camp Menogyn  
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Grand Marais, MN 55604

**Camp Phone:** 218-388-4497

**E-mail:** [info@CampMenogyn.org](mailto:info@CampMenogyn.org)

**Customer Service Center:**

612-822-2267



# WELCOME TO MENOGYN!

Whether this is your child's first or fourth summer travelling to the Northwoods with us, they are about to start a great adventure. For over 100 years, the Menogyn experience has been a positive force in many lives. The challenge, beauty, and fun of small group wilderness travel is as relevant for youth today as it was when Menogyn started back in 1922.

The name, Menogyn, is meant to signify "full of growth." On all our adventures, an atmosphere of personal growth is promoted, cultivated, and reflected upon. This is the reason Menogyn has deeply touched so many individuals and fostered so many long-lasting relationships.

We look forward to helping your child develop lifelong skills and friendships.

The Menogyn Vision:

- To provide transformational experiences in a wilderness setting emphasizing personal growth, quality and relationships.
- To promote the core values of the Y of the North: Honesty, Caring, Respect, Equity, and Responsibility.

We look forward to seeing you up at Menogyn!

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[www.campmenogyn.org](http://www.campmenogyn.org)

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## **\*Virtual\* New Camper Orientation**

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For campers who are new to Menogyn to ask questions, see examples of gear, etc.

For those who are familiar with Menogyn and want to introduce a friend to camp!

**Join us Monday, April 20th  
from 7:00-8:00 pm**

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

PLEASE KEEP THIS BOOK HANDY UNTIL YOUR CAMPER  
RETURNS FROM CAMP!

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# I. Code of the Community

**Parents/Guardians & Campers: Please read this together.**

YMCA Camp Menogyn is committed to providing a welcoming environment for our community. To promote safety and comfort for all, we ask individuals to act respectfully at all times when they are on our property or participating in our programs, behave in a mature and responsible way, and respect the rights and dignity of others.

At Menogyn, we operate under the five core values of the Y of North: caring, honesty, respect, equity, and responsibility. We ask that campers embrace these values during their time at camp. Our goal is to create a camp and trail community where campers feel safe and comfortable while trying new things, stepping outside of their comfort zones, forging connections with their peers, and connecting with the natural world.

**As a Menogyn camper, you agree to refrain from:**

- wearing inappropriate attire
- angry or vulgar language including swearing, name-calling or shouting
- physical contact with another person in any angry or threatening way
- any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person
- harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language or any other menacing behavior
- theft or behavior which results in the destruction of property or the natural environment
- carrying or concealing any weapons or devices or objects which may be used as weapons
- using or possessing illegal chemicals, tobacco or alcohol on YMCA property
- engaging in intentionally risky behavior that endangers the wellbeing of self or others

## ***Bullying Policy***

At YMCA Camp Menogyn, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying. Each camper is expected to treat all other campers with respect, and to help each other achieve the best possible experience. Failure to meet Menogyn's standards of respectful behavior may result in communication with parents/guardians for assistance and potential dismissal of the camper.

Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously. We train all camp staff to identify bullying and to promote honest communication between themselves and campers. Our goal is to work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with fond memories of their camp experience.

## ***Behavior Expectations***

Our staff work hard to help campers with homesickness and other behavioral concerns. We do not issue refunds for campers that leave early due to those reasons.

**YMCA Camp Menogyn reserves the right to dismiss any camper who does not follow respectful behavior expectations as outlined above. In the event that a camper is dismissed, there will be no refund of session fees and the parent or guardian of the camper will be held responsible for the camper's early transportation home from camp.**

The sense of community at Menogyn, and each person's role in the community, is a large reason why people return. Your help in upholding this Code of Community contributes to the success of Menogyn and to everyone's experience at camp.

## II. Menogyn Programs and Progression

Menogyn has been providing transformational experiences in a wilderness setting since 1922, emphasizing personal growth, quality, and relationships. We have a progression of trips that your camper may choose to participate in. Each step in the progression will build on the previous adventure's skills and personal growth as they travel to more remote areas for a longer period of time on-trail. There is not one "right" way to move through the progression. Your camper's guides(s) will recommend the next step after each summer's adventure.

Keep in mind that Menogyn is open year-round! Check out our [website](#) for more information on ways to get your camper and family to Menogyn during the Fall and Winter months.

### The Progression

The following trips are open for registration to all interested teens:

- **5- and 6-day adventures** in canoeing in the Boundary Waters or backpacking in Superior National Forest.
- **12- and 13-day adventures** in canoeing in the BWCA or backpacking in Superior National Forest. Campers can also backpack in Isle Royale National Park or in the Black Elk Wilderness.
- **19- and 20-day adventures** canoeing in Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, backpacking in Yellowstone National Park, or backpacking in Rocky Mountain wilderness areas in Wyoming and Montana. **Campers should have previous wilderness experience.**

The following trips are for campers who have previous Menogyn experience and have been invited by camp in consultation with their previous guides:

- **Nor'westers** – 31-32-day extended adventures with canoeing and backpacking options. Canoers are introduced to river travel and paddle rivers that flow into either Lake Nipigon in Ontario or Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba. Backpackers are introduced to off-trail backpacking in sub-alpine terrain in either the US or Canadian Rockies.
- **Arctic Trips** – 50-day expeditions with canoeing and backpacking options.
  - **Arctic Canoeing:** These river expeditions paddle on rivers through the arctic tundra of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
  - **Arctic Backpacking:** These off-trail adventures hike through the Brooks Range of Alaska travelling through Gates of the Arctic National Park and/or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

### Group Size and Structure

A typical trail group consists of 4-7 campers and one or two Menogyn trail guides. Trail groups are chosen based upon education level, experience, and ability. Friends (groups of two) may register together, and we will do our best to place them together in the same trail group, provided they are one year or less apart in grade/age.

### Guides – Role Models to Learn and Grow With

Menogyn trail guides are dedicated to providing safe, fun, and enriching experiences for each camper. Their competence and passion are a Menogyn trademark. All staff are certified in Wilderness First Responder, CPR, and Lifeguarding with a waterfront component. Besides being well trained, with a vast knowledge of wilderness adventures, trail guides are selected for their maturity, judgment, enthusiasm, and deep respect for the environment and youth work.

### The Trips

#### **5-13 Day Trips**

Menogyn's 5-13-day adventures are designed to accommodate the first-time and experienced canoers, backpackers, and climbers. Your camper will learn how to travel the wilderness with low impact, experience the joy of hard work and teamwork in the outdoors, and experience some of Minnesota's most scenic areas in Superior National Forest and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

#### **Canoeing**

Groups will travel on lakes and streams by canoe, using portage packs to carry equipment across portage trails (trails between lakes). Portages are measured in 'rods' (1 rod = 16 feet) and can be anywhere from 10-400 rods.

Expect an average of 3-5 portages a day. Campers take turns paddling and carrying either packs or canoes, always wearing lifejackets. On average, a group travels 6-12 miles between campsites per day depending on conditions. However, groups are welcome to challenge themselves to travel further!

### **Backpacking**

Groups hike 6-12 miles each day along maintained wilderness trails carrying everything they need on their backs. Each camper carries their own gear, and the group decides how to divide supplies among their packs. Our 5-day groups travel along the Border Route Trail, while the 13-day groups take a ferry to Isle Royale National Park (a large island in Lake Superior) or travel to the Black Elk Wilderness in South Dakota.

### ***19-20 Day Trips***

Menogyn's 19-20-day adventures are designed for campers with experience in canoeing and/or backpacking. These trips can be challenging as they travel more remote and rugged terrain for a longer period of time. Campers who choose one of these trips, regardless of location, should be ready to work hard, step outside of their comfort zones, and embrace living and working with a small group of companions.

Most of the campers on these adventures (ages 15-17) are returning Menogyn campers, but this is not a requirement. To ensure a quality experience for all, we recommend campers without previous Menogyn experience sign up for a 5-13-day session.

### **Backpacking in Yellowstone National Park**

On these adventures to Yellowstone National Park, your camper will live in the mountains, become an experienced backpacker, and further develop wilderness skills. This is a Menogyn backpacker's first taste of traveling at high altitude and campers will discover the joys of mountain backpacking, spectacular slopes, rushing streams, alpine wildlife and clear mountain air! A typical Menogyn route in Yellowstone National Park covers 75-100 miles. Groups will most likely have the chance to summit one or two mountain tops.

### **Canoeing in Quetico Provincial Park**

Quetico Provincial Park is an area just north of Minnesota's Boundary Waters. Menogyn groups travel through this minimally maintained wilderness relying upon the canoeing skills they've built on previous Menogyn trips. This adventure is more challenging than our BWCA trips, with rougher, harder-to-find portage.

### ***Invitational Trips: Nor'westers & Arctic Trips***

Since 1965, Menogyn has been offering extended invitational wilderness trips to young people, 16-19 years old, who wish to deepen their wilderness travel skill set and experience living and working in a small community.

#### **Nor'westers**

Nor'westers span over a 31-32-day session. After preparation time in camp and travel time, the group spends an average of about 22-24 days on trail. The canoeing Nor'westers generally travel on rivers to the Nipigon/Winnipeg Lake areas in Ontario and Manitoba. The backpacking Nor'westers travel a western mountain range such as the Wind River Range in Wyoming or the Willmore Wilderness in Canada. Campers will begin planning for their trip with their guide during the school year.

#### **Arctic Trips**

Campers who go on Nor'westers may be invited to participate in Menogyn's longest expeditions in the Arctic. These trips occur over a 50-day session with approximately 40 days on trail. These trips involve extensive planning and preparation prior to the group's arrival at camp. These groups form in the winter and will plan their trips alongside their guide. The skills and relationships that develop in these groups are truly life changing.

Canoe groups are called Hommes, Femmes, or Gens du Nord (Men, Women, or People of the North) after the French/Canadian voyagers of the 17th and 18th centuries. They canoe rivers in the far north of Canada through the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Backpacking groups, called Waputiks and Wahkanees, travel to Alaska to explore the Brooks Range or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



# III. Preparing for Summer Camp

## Camp Fees

Upon registration, a \$50 deposit is required, except for Invitational Trips. From that point forward, all campers are on a payment plan with payments due February 1, March 1, April 1, and May 1. Alternative payment plans can be arranged with the YMCA Customer Center at 612-822-2267.

We also have scholarships available. To apply for a scholarship, please visit our [website](#) for directions. Please know that there is an appeal process if your original campership designation still doesn't make Menogyn possible for your family.

## Traveling to Canada

Campers traveling to Canada will need a passport or passport card this includes our **Quetico**, **Nor'wester**, and **Arctic** trips. Backpacking Nor'westers will be notified if they are traveling to Canada.

## Packing

When packing for your Menogyn adventure, keep in mind that you will need to pack for your two days at Menogyn before your trip and the night after your trip, in addition to your time on trail. While campers are at camp before their trip, their guides will review all the clothing and gear that they brought to make sure that they have all the proper clothing and gear to keep them warm, dry, and comfortable.

**Above all, avoid cotton!** Check labels and look for synthetic, polyester, and/or wool blends – these materials will keep you warm even if they get wet. You will also want to leave your nice clothes at home – your trail clothes will get dirty, sweaty, and potentially torn. You need good gear and layers to stay warm and dry, but good gear doesn't need to cost a significant amount of money. If the cost of gear is a barrier to a successful, comfortable Menogyn experience, consider checking out Repair Lair in Minneapolis, Great Lake Gear Exchange in Duluth, REI Garage, or your local thrift store for affordable and quality items. Many of our most beloved items were purchased at Goodwill. **Camp can loan most items to campers, as well.**

Call us with any questions. We love talking about gear! 612-330-3054.

**Thrifty Outfitters**  
4153 Minnehaha Ave  
Minneapolis, MN  
612-729-9095

**Duluth Gear Exchange** \*you can sell your gear here, too!  
510 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Duluth, MN  
218-302-4855

Since many campers bring similar items to camp, please make sure that everything your camper brings to camp is **clearly labeled with their name.**

## *Layering*

The summer weather in the areas that we travel can rapidly change from sunny and warm to cold and wet. By having the right 'system' of clothes, you will be able to enjoy your experience through a variety of weather conditions. The layering system is the best approach to keeping comfortable in the wilderness.

Layer 1 – A base layer that will wick away perspiration from your body (polypropylene or capilene)

Layer 2 – An insulating layer that will keep your body warm (wool or fleece sweater)

Layer 3 – An outer shell that will repel water

## ***The Big 3***

For summer wilderness travel, three items take on extra importance.

### **1. Boots**

The most important factor in selecting boots to bring to Menogyn is that they are well-broken-in and comfortable. Please put thought into boots as early in the spring as possible to ensure they are well worn in.

- **For a Canoe Trip:**

An over-the-ankle work boot or light hiking boot that will hold up when wet is best. Some folks use Red Wing work boots or Merrell/Oboz hiking boots. We discourage all water shoes/aqua socks because they don't have ankle support for portaging. We do not recommend heavy mountaineering/backpack boots or boots made with Gore-tex since your boots will always be wet.

- **For a Backpack Trip:**

A mid-weight, sturdy pair of hiking boots with good ankle support work well for our backpacking trips. REI, Nokomis Shoes, and Kaplan Brothers have good selections. Nokomis has nice used boots. Purchase your boots well ahead of your trip and wear them often so that they are broken in by the time you get to camp to avoid blisters on your trip.

### **2. Rain Gear – Jacket and Pants**

Your adventure doesn't stop when the weather turns to rain. The most appropriate rain gear for your Menogyn trip is made of coated nylon or Gore-tex. You want to make sure that your rain gear covers both your upper and lower body. A good combination is a shell-jacket with rain pants (Ex: Stearns, Coleman, Columbia, Patagonia, Marmot etc...). Avoid the "emergency poncho," as these usually rip on the first day. Your camper can also borrow rain gear from camp if interested.

### **3. Sleeping Bag**

**A sleeping bag may be your single biggest purchase.** We recommend synthetic-fill bags as they are the most versatile over multiple summers and climates at camp and are usually less expensive than down-fill bags. A good, lightweight, 3-season, mummy-style sleeping bag rated down to 15-30 degrees, is your best bet. Your camper can also borrow a sleeping bag from camp if interested.

**Menogyn is a wilderness experience. In keeping with this spirit and with the Code of Community, we kindly ask that you leave these things at home:**

- Phones, tablets, electronic games or toys. Personal devices used on the bus to camp will be collected and stored until the ride home.
- Alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs. Menogyn values a tobacco-free environment. Campers who are found to possess or to have taken any of these substances while at Menogyn or on a Menogyn trip will have their parents notified and may be sent home.
- Fireworks/firecrackers.
- Food/beverages (except for your lunch on the bus ride.) The squirrels at Menogyn will find it very quickly!

**Please do bring:**

- A great attitude! – Approach group travel with an open mind and a willingness to participate.

**A complete packing list for canoeing and backpacking trips can be found at the end of this handbook.**

## **Lost and Found**

Please assist us with lost and found by **labeling EVERYTHING with your camper's full name**, including luggage, backpacks, sleeping bags, pillows, books, hats, clothing, etc.

Each day, staff will encourage campers to take responsibility for their belongings. We will also display lost and found at the end of each session. Please call within two days of your camper's session to check on lost & found at 218-388-4497. Please have a detailed description of the item(s) including campers full name, camp session dates, and phone number where you can be reached. We will donate unclaimed items after two weeks.

## **Valuables**

Valuables and meaningful items should be kept at home for safe keeping. We are not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items. Camper's money and valuables such as cell phones and electronics are kept in a safe place while groups are on the trail and returned to them before leaving camp. Please encourage your camper to turn in all money and valuables as soon as they arrive at Menogyn. Menogyn is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal items.

## IV. Transportation

### Parent Drop Off-Pick Up

For parents bringing campers to camp or picking them up, be sure to inform the camp office in advance of their session. When dropping campers off, arrive at Menogyn by **2:00 PM**. This is when the bus arrives, and staff are there with boats to take campers across the lake.

For picking up departing campers, be at Menogyn at **9:45am**. This is when the group will come across the lake to be picked up by parents. If you are unavoidably delayed, please call camp at 218-388-4497 to alert the staff.

### *Directions to Menogyn*

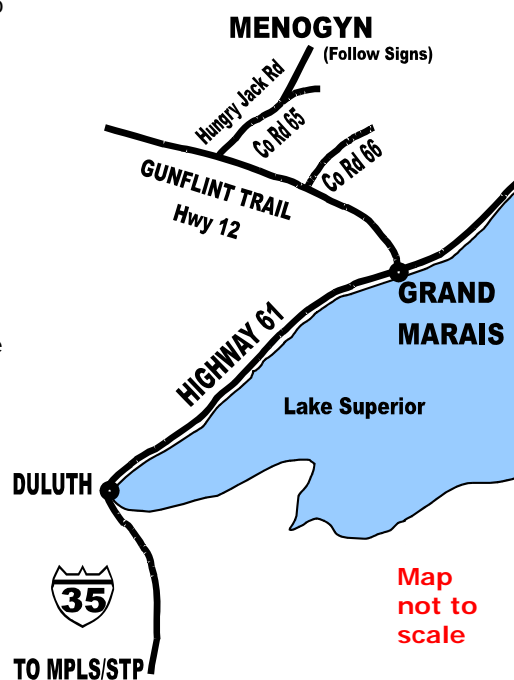
From Minneapolis, it is 300 miles, about a 5.5 hour drive. Take Interstate 35 N to Duluth, then Hwy 61 to Grand Marais, MN.

Turn left on the Gunflint Trail (Cty Rd 12) proceed for 29 miles; turn right on County Road 21 (Old Cty Rd 65/Hungry Jack Road) go 3 miles on this dirt road and follow the signs to the Menogyn landing on West Bearskin Lake. Camp is 1/2 mile by water across the lake.

Use the intercom in the Welcome Pavilion to alert us of your arrival if no one is there to greet you.

### *Accommodations in the Area*

Many resorts are available in the Grand Marais & North Shore area. For information on accommodations visit [northshorevisitor.com](http://northshorevisitor.com) and let them know Menogyn sent you!



### Bus Transportation

Please be on time for the bus. Campers have a limited time in camp to plan for their trips, and for those going on longer expeditions, their time in camp is precious.

### *Bus Schedule*

Departure to Menogyn	Returns from Menogyn
<b>Lakewood Hills Park</b> Drop-off 7:00 am Departs at 7:30 am	Arrives at 4:00 pm
<b>Duluth Thompson Overlook</b> Departs at 9:30am	Arrives at 1:15-1:30 pm

### ***Twin Cities Pick-Up and/or Drop-Off***

**Where:** Lakewood Hills Park 2110 Orchard Ln, White Bear Lake, MN 55110

**Directions:** The bus leaves from the Lakewood Hills Park lot which neighbors the White Bear Lake YMCA. Please use the entrance for Lakewood Hills Park.

### ***Duluth Pick-Up and/or Drop-Off***

**Where:** Thompson Overlook Rest Area.

**Directions:** From Interstate 35, just south of Duluth, take Exit #249-Boundary

Avenue exit and follow the signs to the parking lot of the Rest Area. Please arrive in plenty of time and be patient in case of traffic delays.

### ***Bus Lunch***

**\*\*\*Bus to Camp: Bring a bag lunch and beverage for the trip up to camp. \*\*\***

Bus from Camp: On the return trip, camp will provide lunch for campers.

### ***Bus Safety***

Campers are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior while on the bus or van and be respectful of drivers and other passengers. The bus and all bus stops are an extension of Camp Menogyn and are tobacco and substance free spaces, campers are expected to conduct themselves accordingly.

### **Pick-up and Drop-off Safety at YMCA Camp Menogyn**

Because the safety of your camper is our number one priority, we have drop-off and pickup procedures. When you arrive at camp or at a bus stop, please check in at the arrival table.

When you pick up your camper from camp or from a bus stop, campers will be asked to remain on the bus or at a designated place at camp. A lead staff person will connect campers with parents/guardians.

If a friend or relative is picking up your child that person should bring their driver's license. They will be asked to show their license and sign next to your child's name. ***If an adult does not come to pick up their camper, a staff member will try to locate the identified emergency contact.*** YMCA staff members are not allowed to transport campers at the end of a session.

## V. Camp Life at Menogyn

A camper's experience at camp generally involves three stages: 1. pre-trail in-camp time, 2. time on trail, and 3. post-trail in-camp time. Each section below further explains how a camper's time is spent at camp regardless of session length.

### **Basic Trip Schedules**

<b>Day 1</b>	All campers arrive at Menogyn, meet their counselor(s) and trail group, check in with the Health Officer, begin group activities, and enjoy an evening opening campfire.
<b>Day 2</b>	Skills training, menu and route planning, food pack-out, and in-camp programming.
<b>Day 3</b>	Head out on-trail! (Some trips may go on-trail day 2)
<b>Day 3 and on</b>	Camping out on the trail and backpacking or canoeing during the day.

### **On Trail**

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> to last day</b>	Return to YMCA Camp Menogyn for the "Welcome," check-in with Health Officer, take a sauna, banquet dinner, closing campfire, and special small group closing ceremony.
<b>Final day</b>	Campers evaluate the YMCA Camp Menogyn program, the Tuck Shop is open, and we all head back across the lake for the bus trip home after breakfast.

### **Pre-Trail In Camp**

#### ***Planning***

Each camper is involved in planning their trip. They work together to plan menus and the route which they will travel.

#### ***The "Menogyn Shuffle"***

While campers are in camp, they will take part in the Menogyn Shuffle. During this time groups rotate through various stations that help them prepare for their trip and complete pre-trip tasks. The Menogyn Shuffle includes a visit to the Health Officer, York Factor (canoe repair shop), Equipment Room, Trail Department (trail food pack out), and the waterfront for a water comfort assessment.

## ***Food***

While in base camp our food is hearty and cooked from scratch. Breakfasts can include eggs & biscuits, pancakes, bacon, fruit, etc. Lunches can consist of burritos or hearty vegetarian chili & corn bread. Dinners, such as lasagna, homemade bread, fajitas, salad greens, and milk, keep us happy and ready to go!

## **On Trail**

### ***Equipment***

Menogyn provides all trail equipment, including tents, packs, stoves, cooking implements, canoes, water purification, first aid kits, paddles, canoes, personal flotation devices, and bear hang kits/bear barrels.

This gear is used throughout the summer, so it is important that campers treat their issued gear well in order to maintain it for future campers. Treating the gear with respect also allows camp to keep our trip fees low in comparison to similar programs. As you prepare your camper for their Menogyn experience, please prepare them for this aspect of camp.

### ***Skills***

The campers on all Menogyn trips will learn the skills necessary for canoeing and backpacking safely. Skills learned may include:

- Canoe strokes
- Campsite selection and set-up
- Portaging
- Leadership
- Map reading and navigation
- Packing a pack well
- Fire building
- Outdoor cooking
- Knot tying
- Teamwork
- High mountain travel (invitational trips only)
- River travel (invitational trips only)

## ***Food***

We have a tradition of delicious meals on-trail at Menogyn. Trail food must be lightweight, compact, tasty, and above all, nutritious. Much of the food we take on-trail is similar to what we eat off-trail, but with some key differences since groups on trail cannot refrigerate their food. Much of the food we bring on trail is familiar food in a dehydrated form, or we choose to carry non-perishable versions of familiar foods. Our guides are trained to use these non-perishable ingredients to cook and bake delicious meals that anyone in the "front country" would enjoy eating. Here is a sample of some of the food your camper can expect to eat:

<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Dinner</b>	<b>Beverages</b>	<b>Dessert</b>
Pancakes	Cheese/Salami	Stir fry	Hot Cocoa	Brownies
Cinnamon rolls	Tortillas	Mac & Cheese	Milk (powdered)	Puddings
Oatmeal	Chocolate	Burritos	Coffee	Cakes
Granola	Dried fruit	Pizza	Tea	Cookies
	Trail Mix	Falafel		Wild Blueberry Pie

## **Post-Trip In Camp**

### ***The “Welcome”***

At the end of each session, all groups experience the “Welcome.” This is a festive, fun-filled afternoon performance celebrating a return from the wilderness put on by the “Engages.”

### ***The “Menogyn Shuffle”***

When campers return from trail, they are responsible for cleaning and returning all gear to the Trail Department and Equipment Room. They also check in with the Health Officer at the end of their trip and have the opportunity to take a sauna in our woodfired, dry sauna mere feet away from the shore of Bearskin Lake.

### ***Banquet***

The evening of a group’s return, our kitchen staff prepare a delicious banquet with all the foods campers may have missed on trail, like roasted vegetables, meat, salads, freshly baked bread, and dessert. This is one of the many ways we celebrate all campers once they return to Menogyn.

### ***Closing Campfire***

The closing campfire is a time for campers to share memories, stories, and reflections from their trips with the wider camp community. After the closing campfire, each group breaks off into their small group for their small group closing reflection.

### ***Invitational Trip Welcomes (Nor’Wester and Arctic Trips only)***

Parents and guardians are invited to join us at camp for the welcome celebrations at camp, including the welcome, banquet, and closing campfire. Please note that groups are still responsible for cleaning and returning their gear, as well as other check-in duties. We appreciate parent/guardian cooperation as we support the returning campers in both celebrating their accomplishments and completing their various post-trip tasks.



# VI. Health & Wellness

## Health & Wellness

Safety is our top priority, and we do our best to prevent injuries and uphold a culture of caring, good hygiene, and vigilance. Parents/guardians should know that professional medical attention is delayed when campers are on trail. To mitigate this risk, we take a multi-pronged approach to maintaining the health and safety of campers which includes pre-session screening, highly trained guides, on-site Health Officers, and risk management plans for each wilderness area groups travel.

We ask for parent and guardian assistance in managing risk by thoroughly completing their **CampDoc** profile on time. Our goal is to make our wilderness trips accessible to as many campers as possible, while also maintaining the physical and emotional safety of all participants. Knowing the medical history of campers is a key part of risk management – it is better for us to know about a camper's history and make any necessary plans with their guide(s), than for us to discover an undisclosed medical condition while a group is in the backcountry. When filling out your camper's health history form, please include all physical, emotional, and mental health information, and any pertinent family history.

Before your campers arrive at camp, our trail guides participate in staff training which emphasizes camper physical and emotional safety as well as managing risk while travelling our backcountry travel locations. All our trail guides are also certified Wilderness First Responders, Lifeguards with a waterfront component, and CPR providers.

In addition to our highly trained guides, our on-site Health Officers complete pre-trip and post-trip check-ins and consult with guides as needed when they are in the backcountry.

The nearest medical facility to camp is the Grand Marais Hospital, approximately 40 min away. Since our trips visit wilderness areas across the US and Canada, we also maintain a list of nearby medical facilities where we travel. All trail groups have a satellite phone for emergency communication only. While they can call camp, the satellite phones are not continually on and able to receive calls. In the event of an on-trail emergency, groups will contact camp for assistance.

While a group is away from camp, our staff carry health history forms, health exam forms, and signed consent forms for all campers. In the event of illness or injury requiring definitive medical care, these documents stay with the camper. If a camper is evacuated from their trip, camp will notify the camper's parents/guardians and work with them to make a plan, taking into consideration the context of the evacuation.

## Camp Menogyn Essential Eligibility Criteria

Camp Menogyn's summer program focuses on wilderness trips for teenagers. Depending on age and experience, camp sessions range from 5-50 days and trips travel across North America. Camp Menogyn trips operate in remote wilderness areas and our groups travel by foot or canoe. On backpacking trips, groups hike each day and camp in a new location each night. On our canoe trips, groups paddle across lakes and portage (the process of carrying all your gear on paths connecting lakes) multiple times each day and camp in a new location each night. All the areas we travel to are primitive camping, which means there are no established shelters or bathrooms.

Our priority is the health and well-being of all our campers, along with providing a positive and enriching experience. To help you identify the skills you will need to successfully participate in Camp Menogyn's summer program, Y of the North has created the following Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC). The General Criteria are applicable to all wilderness programs. We have also created additional criteria for each type of trip: canoeing or backpacking. If you are unable to meet certain criteria, please contact us. We may be able to make a reasonable accommodation unless it would change the fundamental nature of the trip, would compromise your camper's safety or the safety of other campers or counselors, or would place an undue financial or administrative burden on Camp Menogyn. Please reach out with questions regarding your camper's health, medical and/or accessibility needs prior to registration. If we are unable to accommodate your camper at one of our Wilderness Programs, we may be able to accommodate them at another YMCA camp.

After instruction, each camper must...

## **General**

- Be able to understand verbal and/or visual instructions.
- Be able to understand basic safety instructions or directions in English in an emergency situation.
- Be able to communicate personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.
- Be self-sufficient in basic self-care and hygiene such as hydration, nourishment, bathroom use, and dress.
- Be able to adhere to medication and treatment plan outlined by parent/guardians and their medical professional(s) if needed.
- Be able to refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, and misuse of prescription or OTC drugs.
- Be able to understand environmental and equipment-related risks when explained and follow instructions related to those risks even if Wilderness trip staff is not present.
- Be able to adapt to the physical and emotional rigors of a wilderness environment, at minimum a day from advanced medical care, for the entire length of the wilderness trip.
- Be able to walk unassisted over uneven terrain.
- Be able and willing to contribute to group tasks and responsibilities.
- Be able to contribute to and maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment for self and group members.
- Be able to respect the wilderness environment and adhere to Leave No Trace principles.
- Ability to act independently and as a part of the community.

## **Canoe**

- Be able to carry packs and other gear items weighing at least 40 pounds over rough terrain for up to 1 mile with rest breaks as needed.
- Be able to wear a Personal Flotation Device and maintain a face-up position in water while wearing a PFD.
- Be able to sit in a canoe for up to 4-6 hours a day with stretch breaks as needed.
- Be able to grip and control a paddle.
- Be able to enter and exit a canoe independently.
- Be able to re-enter a canoe from the water with assistance.

## **Backpack**

- Be able to carry a backpack weighing at least 50 pounds while hiking over rough terrain for 4-6 hours with rest breaks as needed.

## **Medication**

Trail guides control all camper medications during their time at camp, apart from life-saving medications. For life saving medications like albuterol inhalers and epi-pens, we ask that campers bring two; one for the camper to hang on to and one for the guide to hang on to. Trail guides administer all camper medications apart from insulin shots and medications requiring similar administration procedures. Our staff will work with parents/guardians, the child, and the child's medical providers to explore reasonable accommodations to permit the child to fully enjoy our programs.

We ask that parents and guardians notify camp if a camper's medications change from the time that their forms are turned in.

Medications **must** come to camp in their **original packages**. This means that over-the-counter drugs should come in the package with the company's directions and prescriptions come to camp in their original prescription bottle/tube/package. Please clearly label all over-the-counter medications with first & last name and instructions. **Be sure that there is enough for the entire session, plus a few days' extra supply (just in case).**

Menogyn staff are trained in delivering epinephrine via autoinjector and ampul/vial/syringe. Our staff are prohibited from administering any other medication via injections, including insulin and testosterone.

## **Gender at Menogyn**

Menogyn and the Y of the North Camps hope to provide a safe space for all our campers to explore their identities and discover their life path. We value identity exploration as an integral part of adolescent development. We welcome all participants into our programming including transgender, gender non-conforming, gender non-binary, and other gender expansive campers.

In striving to create a welcoming community for all campers, YMCA Camps uphold the Nondiscrimination Statement of the YMCA of the North. This statement includes gender identity and sexual orientation. As an institution, we do not tolerate discrimination and bullying of campers based on their gender identity or their perceived gender identity.

If you have any questions about supporting your camper's identity while at camp, please reach out to [info@campmenogyn.org](mailto:info@campmenogyn.org).

### ***Gender and Trail Groups***

Menogyn offers all gender and single gender session options, and we hope to continue to expand this offering to all Menogyn trips. We invite campers who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming to choose trip sessions where they feel most comfortable.

- **Single gender (female and male) sessions** organize campers into trail groups according into gender-confirming groups along the female/male gender binary.
- **All gender sessions** are open to all interested campers. Learn more about our all gender sessions below.

### ***All Gender Sessions***

Menogyn's all gender trips offer experiences for campers who are interested in a wilderness tripping experience that is not defined by gender.

We hope that all gender trips will remove barriers to participation for campers who identify as Trans, Gender Non-conforming, and Queer. However, all gender trips are open to everyone and are not intended exclusively as an affinity space.

### ***Judging Camper Readiness for an All Gender Session***

- Campers who register for all gender trips should be prepared to be open and affirming of all group members regardless of gender identity.
- Campers who register for all gender sessions should be open to conversations about differences in identity. Immersive experiences like wilderness trips tend to initiate these types of conversations organically within diverse groups.
- Wilderness trips can be a great space to build connections across differences. However, some campers may feel uncomfortable or simply be unable to express themselves fully in the presence of people of other genders based on their developmental stage. These campers should consider single gender trips.
- Community building within a group is an important component of a Menogyn experience. As a result, our [Code of Community](#) prohibits exclusive relationships - romantic or otherwise - in all of our programming. Campers who have struggled to maintain appropriate boundaries with peers of other genders in other areas of their lives should opt for single gender trips.

### ***Groups and Staffing***

- All Menogyn wilderness trips will have one or two Trail Guides. They will operate on a ratio of 2-6 campers to 1-2 staff people depending on the age, experience and needs of the group.
- We will select Trail Guides based on their experience working with youth and interest in leading all gender trips.
- Trail guides leading all gender trips will confirm campers' pronouns and preferred names. They will also use correct pronouns and names throughout the trip experience.
- We will brief the trail guides of all gender trips on health and hygiene needs that affect people differently based on their biology or gender presentation including menstruation, chest binding and shaving.

### ***Sleeping, Changing and Showering***

- Campers and staff on all gender trips will stay in shared tents while on trail and a single cabin while on site.
- Groups will establish a changing area and a communication plan for affording campers privacy while changing.
- Campers on all gender trips will shower in our gender-neutral shower house at the end of their session. All biffs, restrooms, and showers are single-stall, gender-neutral spaces.

## **Gender Specific Notes on Preparing for Camp**

### ***Menstruation***

Menogyn campers who menstruate should make sure to bring enough menstrual products to care for themselves if they have their period while at camp. The lifestyle changes that accompany trail life can sometimes mean getting your period for the first time or at an unexpected time. Best to be prepared!

All Menogyn campers receive an opaque, plastic “blue bag” for discarding personal trash including floss, Band-Aids and menstrual products. Campers are welcome to store menstrual products in the top of their pack or in the group daypack. Groups will stop regularly throughout the day to give campers time for personal care like drinking water, putting on sunscreen, going to the bathroom and taking care of needs related to menstruation. However, it is also important for campers to have an open line of communication with the Trail Guide in case they need to stop unexpectedly. Hand sanitizer, water, and soap are always available for campers to clean their hands when they need it. Campers keep their bodies clean by swimming on trail.

Generations of menstruating people have lived and recreated in the outdoors throughout human history. Guides can answer any questions you have!

### ***Chest Binding***

We recognize that chest binding often has important emotional benefits, but it also can have physical risks depending on the type of binder a person chooses to use. We encourage campers and their families to research risks associated with their binder style before coming to camp. Many binders are not recommended for use during exercise because they restrict lung function especially when wet. As a result, these binders may not be appropriate for campers to wear during physically challenging wilderness travel days.

Campers who wish to bind while at camp might opt for an athletic compression shirt, dedicated sport binder, layered t-shirts or tank tops, a high support sports bra or layered sports bras instead. These options offer chest compression but also are designed to let the lungs expand and the skin breathe. We encourage campers to try exercising with their binder at home before using it at camp.

### ***Shaving***

Menogyn Campers and staff generally do not shave while on trail. We understand that some campers may need to shave their faces in order to align their gender presentation with their gender identity. We will work with campers on an individual basis to create a plan for shaving their face on trail, as necessary.

### ***Crossing the Canadian Border***

Campers who register for Quetico, Explorer Canoe, Advanced Explorer Canoe, Advanced Explorer Backpack and Voyageur trips should be prepared to travel to Canada. These campers will have their identifying documents reviewed and may have their legal name referenced. Border agents have the jurisdiction to submit folks crossing the border to a search.

If a camper plans to change the [gender on their US passport](#), we recommend starting that process as soon as possible to not risk their trip because they do not have their passport in time.

### ***Updating Your Campers YMCA Account***

Parents can change their camper's name and gender in their YMCA account, and we encourage you to do this so that our guides have the most correct information about their campers when they arrive at Menogyn. Regardless of the name used at registration, all guides will ask all campers how they wish to be addressed at camp, including name and pronouns.

Families can change the name or gender ascribed to a camper's profile in our registration system by [contacting the Customer Service Center](#).

## VII. Communication


### Sending Mail to Your Camper


Campers are encouraged to write home upon their arrival at camp. Family and friends are encouraged to write letters for campers to receive upon their return to camp. We are unable to sign for packages and have limited storage space for large items.

To send mail to camp, please address your letter as follows:

Your Camper's Name  
Session Date  
YMCA Camp Menogyn  
55 Menogyn Trail  
Grand Marais, MN 55604

### Stay Connected

 Look for your teenager in our photo gallery on Menogyn's Facebook page. We post photos of campers with their trail group before they head out on their trip.

 You can also see what's going on at camp by following menogyn.magic on Instagram.

After a camper's trip, they can submit their photos to [campmenogyn@gmail.com](mailto:campmenogyn@gmail.com) and we may feature their photos on Instagram, Facebook, or in our camp brochure.

*Please keep in mind, we are a wilderness camp, so Internet connectivity can be limited. We will do our best to get photos uploaded in a timely manner! We do not post photos while your camp is on trail having an unplugged experience.*

### Contacting the Customer Service Center

The YMCA Customer Service Center is staffed year-round. All questions concerning billing, bus schedules, registration, etc., may be directed to:

Phone: 612-822-2267  
Fax: 612-223-6322

In an urgent situation, Menogyn has a phone with an answering machine at 218-388-4497. Messages are checked and answered at this number between 7:30am-7:30pm during the summer camp season.

While a group is on trail, we operate on the rule of thumb that "no news is good news." While a group is on trail, we do not have the capability to communicate with individual campers or get photos from their time on trail. Camp Menogyn staff will contact you if there is a situation that impacts your camper's experience at camp or on trail.

### Session Cancellations

#### *General Policies*

- **No refunds are available for cancellations after the payment-in-full date of May 1st. Cancellations Must be received in writing by May 1st.**
- Camp session change requests received one month or more prior to the session start date will be made, pending availability, and assessed a \$25 change fee.

- Campers who do not show up to a session will not receive a refund. Program deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable.
- No payment adjustment will be made for late arrival, early departure or dismissal from camp. No adjustment to registration cost will be made for campers who are tardy, absent from camper days or are restricted due to disciplinary reasons, or inability to manage pre-existing conditions, current illness/injury\* or dismissal.

### ***Extenuating Circumstances***

If your camper is experiencing a physical/mental illness or injury prior to the session that prevents them from participating, a medical provider will need to provide proof of illness or injury to consider a partial refund. If you pay in full, refunds will only be eligible until May 1st.

Menogyn cannot refund payments when sessions are cut short or canceled due to circumstances beyond our control. These may include, but are not limited to, wilderness area closures, forest fires, flooding, or other climate and environmental hazards that would prevent us from providing a safe and meaningful experience for all participants.

# Appendix: Canoeing Trip Packing List

## Footwear

- ☐ Trail Boots **\*BIG THREE ITEM\***
- ☐ Sport sandals, such as Chacos or Tevas. *No flip flops, please!*
- ☐ 1-2 pair wool socks or heavy polypropylene per week on trail (these will get wet)
- ☐ 1 pair medium-thin wool socks for evening wear per week on trail (these are meant to stay dry)

## Bedding

- ☐ Sleeping Bag **\*BIG THREE ITEM\*** Preferably

## Trail Clothes

- ☐ 1 pair shorts – light, durable, and fast drying, we recommend nylon shorts with a liner
- ☐ 1 pair long pants – light, durable and fast drying, no jeans or sweatpants
- ☐ 2 T-shirts
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Rain Gear **\*BIG THREE ITEM\*** jacket and pants,

"3-season" synthetic

- ☐ Waterproof stuff sack for sleeping bag
- ☐ *Sleeping bag liner (optional)*
- ☐ Thermarest/Sleeping Pad (optional, but recommended for 20-day sessions)

## Headwear

- ☐ Sunglasses with a safety cord
- ☐ Hat with brim for sun protection (i.e. baseball cap)
- ☐ Wool or fleece hat (beanie or winter hat)

## In-Camp Clothes

These clothes will stay at Menogyn during your trip. Cotton is ok.

- ☐ 1 pair long pants
- ☐ 1-2 pair shorts
- ☐ 2 t-shirts
- ☐ 2 long sleeve shirts
- ☐ 3 pair socks
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ 1 pair light-weight athletic shoes
- ☐ **Banquet Outfit:** Upon arrival back at Camp from Trail some Guides/Campers choose to wear

## Personal Items

Please avoid products with strong smells – they will attract bugs and bears! Some items will stay at Menogyn.

- ☐ Small ditty bag
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Dental floss
- ☐ Bar soap or Liquid Soap
- ☐ Comb or brush
- ☐ Washcloth or PackTowel (can be used on trail)
- ☐ 1 towel
- ☐ Lotion
- ☐ Sunscreen (minimum SPF 15)
- ☐ Chapstick with sunscreen
- ☐ Bug repellent (30% DEET or Picaridin recommended)
- ☐ Headlamp/Flashlight (w/ extra batteries)
- ☐ 2 quart-sized water bottles (Nalgene's work great!)
- ☐ Prescription medications **in original container**
- ☐ Menstruation products (bring extra)
- ☐ Extra pair eyeglasses and/or contact lenses

## Miscellaneous Items (OPTIONAL)

- ☐ Camera (w/ waterproof case) or Disposable Camera
- ☐ Journal for writing
- ☐ Cards, hacky sack, games
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Lightweight camp chair
- ☐ Fishing rod & gear (MN fishing license)
- ☐ Money – for Menogyn Tuck Shop: t-shirts (\$24), sweatshirts (\$40-60), hats (\$30), sweatpants (\$40), maps (\$10), mugs, journals, pens, etc.
- ☐ Pen
- ☐ Books/field guide



# Appendix: Backpacking Trip Packing List

## Footwear

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- ☐ Trail Boots **\*BIG THREE ITEM\*** light to medium weight boot, remember to break them in before your trip!
- ☐ Sport sandals, such as Chacos or Tevas. *No flip flops, please!*
- ☐ 1 pair heavy weight wool socks per week on-trail
- ☐ 1-2 pair light weight 'liner' sock (polypropylene or silk)
- ☐ 1-2 pair medium-thin wool socks for evening wear per week on trail
- ☐ Gaiters (optional for 6- to 20-day sessions, recommended for Nor'wester and Long Trips)

## Bedding

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- ☐ Sleeping Bag **\*BIG THREE ITEM\*** preferably "3-season" synthetic
- ☐ Waterproof stuff sack for sleeping bag
- ☐ *Sleeping bag liner (optional)*
- ☐ Thermarest/Sleeping Pad (optional, but recommended for 20-day sessions)

## Headwear

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- ☐ Sunglasses with a safety cord
- ☐ Hat with brim for sun protection (i.e. baseball cap)
- ☐ Wool or fleece hat (beanie or winter hat)

## Trail Clothes

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- ☐ 1 pair shorts – light, durable, and fast drying, we recommend nylon shorts with a liner
- ☐ 1 pair long pants – light, durable and fast drying, no jeans or sweatpants
- ☐ 2 t-shirts
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Rain Gear **\*BIG THREE ITEM\*** jacket and pants, no ponchos or thin plastic rain gear
- ☐ 1 long underwear shirt (polypropylene, capilene)
- ☐ 1 long underwear bottom (polypropylene, capilene)
- ☐ 1 swimsuit
- ☐ 1-2 heavy wool or fleece sweater or shirt, no cotton sweatshirts
- ☐ 1 pair wool or fleece long pants
- ☐ Wool or fleece mittens
- ☐ 1 *"puffy: synthetic or down jacket (optional)*

## In-Camp Clothes

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Some of these items will be worn on the road trip to the trail head, others will stay at Menogyn. Cotton is ok.

- ☐ 1 pair long pants
- ☐ 1-2 pair shorts
- ☐ 2 t-shirts
- ☐ 2 long sleeve shirts
- ☐ 3 pair socks
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ 1 pair light-weight athletic shoes
- ☐ Small duffel or day pack (for road trip)

## Personal Items

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Please avoid products with strong smells – they will attract bugs and bears! Some items will stay at Menogyn.

- ☐ Small ditty bag
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Dental floss
- ☐ Bar soap or Liquid Soap
- ☐ Comb or brush
- ☐ Washcloth or PackTowel (can be used on trail)
- ☐ 1 towel
- ☐ Lotion
- ☐ Sunscreen (minimum SPF 15)
- ☐ Chapstick with sunscreen
- ☐ Bug repellent
- ☐ 2 quart-sized water bottles (Nalgene's work great!)
- ☐ Headlamp/Flashlight (w/ extra batteries)
- ☐ Prescription medications in original bottle
- ☐ Menstruation products (bring extra)
- ☐ Extra pair eyeglasses and/or contact lenses

## Miscellaneous Items (OPTIONAL)

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- ☐ Camera (w/ waterproof case) or Disposable Camera
- ☐ Journal for writing
- ☐ Cards, hacky sack, games
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Lightweight camp chair
- ☐ Fishing rod & gear (MN fishing license)
- ☐ Pens/pencils
- ☐ Books/field guide
- ☐ Money – for Menogyn Tuck Shop: t-shirts (\$24), sweatshirts (\$40-60), hats (\$30), sweatpants (\$40), maps (\$10), mugs, journals, pens, etc.
- ☐ Pen
- ☐ Books/field guide

# Appendix: Engagé Trip Packing List

## Footwear

- ☐ Boots or other closed toed shoes (for projects around camp)
- ☐ Sport sandals, such as Chacos or Tevas. *No flip flops, please!*

## Bedding

- ☐ Sleeping Bag preferably "3-season" synthetic
- ☐ Twin bed sheets (optional)
- ☐ Pillow (optional)

## In-Camp Clothes

- ☐ Hat with brim for sun protection
- ☐ Wool or fleece hat (beanie or winter)
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ 1-2 pairs long pants
- ☐ 1-2 pairs shorts
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ 2 t-shirts
- ☐ 2 long sleeve shirts
- ☐ Rain jacket
- ☐ Warm layers (top and bottom)
- ☐ 3 pair socks
- ☐ Underwear

## Personal Items

- ☐ Prescription medications **in original container**
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Dental floss
- ☐ Bar soap or liquid soap
- ☐ Comb or brush
- ☐ Towel
- ☐ Lotion
- ☐ Sunscreen (minimum SPF 15)
- ☐ Chapstick with sunscreen
- ☐ Bug repellent
- ☐ 2 Water bottles (Quart-size Nalgene's work great!)
- ☐ Headlamp/Flashlight (w/ extra batteries)
- ☐ Menstruation products (bring extra)
- ☐ Extra pair eyeglasses and/or contact lenses

## Miscellaneous Items (OPTIONAL)

- ☐ Camera (w/ waterproof case) or Disposable Camera
- ☐ Journal and pen
- ☐ Cards, hacky sack, games
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Lightweight camp chair
- ☐ Fishing rod & gear (MN fishing license)
- ☐ Books/field guide
- ☐ Money – for Menogyn Tuck Shop: t-shirts (\$24), sweatshirts (\$40-60), hats (\$30), sweatpants (\$40), maps (\$10), mugs, journals, pens, etc.

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## **\*Virtual\* New Camper Orientation**

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For campers who are new to Menogyn to ask questions, see examples of gear, etc.

For those who are familiar with Menogyn and want to introduce a friend to camp!

**Join us Monday, April 20th  
from 7:00-8:00 pm**

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

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### **Summer Address**

55 Menogyn Trail  
Grand Marais, MN 55604  
Phone: 218-388-4497



### **Fall, Winter, Spring Address**

651 Nicollet Mall Suite 500  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
Phone: 612-822-2267