

Crutch

INSTRUCTIONS

Crutches can help you walk when you have an injured hip, leg, knee, ankle, or foot. Your doctor will tell you how much weight, if any, you can put on your leg.

Be sure that your crutches fit you. When you stand up in your normal posture, there should be space for two or three fingers between the top of the crutch and your armpit. When you let your hands hang down, the hand grips should be at your wrists. When you put your hands on the hand grips, your elbows should be slightly bent.

AFTER YOUR VISIT

Walking

- Bend your elbows slightly. Press the padded top parts of the crutches against your sides, under your arm pits.
- Put both crutches about 12 inches in front of you.
- Put your weight on the handgrips, not on the pads under your arms. (Constant pressure against your underarms can cause numbness). Swing your body forward. If you have been told not to put any weight on your injured leg, keep that leg bent and off the ground.
- To complete the step, put your weight on the healthy leg.
- Move your crutches about 12 inches in front of you, and begin the next step.
- Take small steps.
- Use ramps and elevators when you can and don't forget to remove throw rugs from hard surfaced floors.

(See Figure 1)

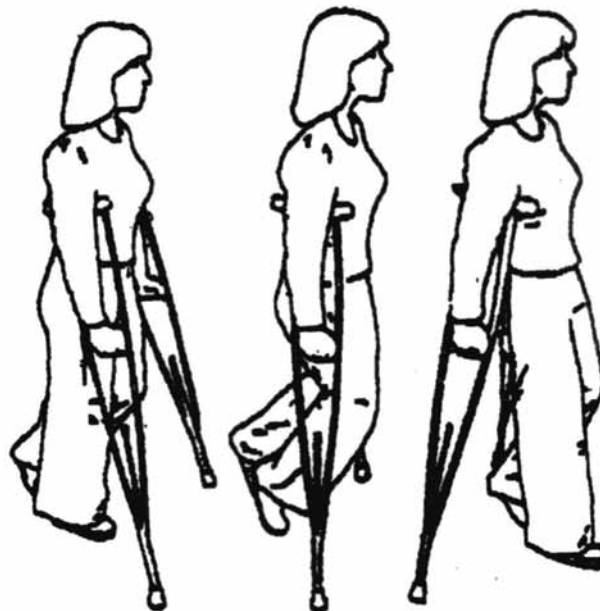


Figure 1: Walking

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Figure 2: Sitting in a chair



Figure 3: Ascending stairs and curb



Figure 4: Descending stairs and curb

Sitting down and getting up from a chair

- To sit, turn and back up to the chair until the chair's edge is felt against the back of your legs. Keep your weak leg extended forward.
- Remove the crutches from under your arms. Place crutches together on your weak side and use one hand to hold both crutches by the handgrips. With the other hand, hold onto the seat and slowly lower yourself onto the chair.
- Lay the crutches on the ground near your chair. If you prop them up, they may fall over.
- To get up from a chair, pick up the crutches and put them in one hand beside your injured leg. Put your weight on the handgrips of the crutches and on your good leg to stand up.

(See Figure 2)

Going up and down stairs

- To go up stairs, step up with your good leg and then bring the crutches and your injured leg to the step.
- To go down stairs, put your crutches and injured leg on the lower step. Then bring your good leg to the lower step.
- This saying may help you remember: "Up with the good, down with the bad."

(See Figure 3 & 4)

Types of Weight Bearing Precautions

- Non-weight bearing: Do not apply any weight through involved leg.
- Toe Touch weight bearing: Allow only the ball of the foot to touch the floor for balance purposes.
- Weight bearing as tolerated: Allow as much weight as tolerated through the involved leg

Precautions

If any of the following conditions occur while using crutches, you may call **1-800-780-1277** and request to be connected to the advice nurse.

- Uncomfortable gait
- Blisters
- Pain in the arm or underarm
- Numbness in the arm or underarm