



Using Crutches

Crutches will be adjusted to fit you based on your height. They should sit about 1 inch below your armpit. You should have a slight bend of about 20-30 degrees in both elbows and the crutches should never be more than 6-8 inches in front of your toes or out to your side. Regardless of whether or not you have been instructed to bear weight, the injured leg/foot always moves with the crutches.

Walking:

Bring the crutches forward evenly, keeping your injured leg/foot off the ground. Lean forward, putting your weight on your hands against the grips of the crutches. Do NOT rest your armpits on the crutches, this will cause unnecessary irritation and pain. Swing your uninjured leg/foot forward, placing your foot just in front of the crutches. *If the doctor says you may put some weight on your injured leg/foot, follow the same instructions allowing your injured leg/foot to touch the ground.

Getting up from a chair or bed:

Hold both crutches by the grips in the hand on the side of the injured leg/foot. Push up from the chair or bed with the other hand while pushing up on the crutches at the same time. Use your good leg to bring you to a standing position. Get your balance and bring your crutches into the proper position before starting to walk.

Sitting down:

Hold your crutches by the grips in the hand on the injured side. Hold onto the chair or bed with the other hand and lower yourself down slowly. Unless you are allowed to put some weight on the injured leg, keep your injured leg off the ground and keep your weight on the uninjured leg.

Going *up* stairs:

Get close to the stairs. Step up with the uninjured leg, and then bring the crutches and the injured leg up to that same step. Repeat. *If there is a handrail, put both crutches under the opposite arm and use the rail for support. *Remember: Up with the good, down with the bad.*

Going *down* stairs:

First bring the crutches and the injured leg down to the lower step and then step down with the uninjured leg. Repeat. *If there is a handrail, put both crutches under the opposite arm and use the rail for support. *Remember: Up with the good, down with the bad.*

Be careful not to slip on water or ice! Feel free to add extra padding for comfort.