

Walking with crutches

You will have been asked to walk either:

Putting no weight on your “bad leg”,
which is called non weight bearing
or

Putting some weight on your “bad” leg,
which is called partial weight bearing.

Non weight bearing

- Keep your “bad” leg off the ground by holding it slightly in front of you with your knee slightly bent
- Stand on your “good” leg
- Move both crutches forward keeping them apart and level
- Move your body forwards between the crutches allowing your “bad” leg to swing through.

Partial weight bearing

- Move both crutches forward keeping them apart and level
- Place your “bad” leg on the ground, level with the crutches
- Step forward with your “good” leg.

Maintenance

Check your crutches for wear and tear.
Always ensure that:

- The crutches are not bent
- The joints on the crutches are not loose
- The rubber stoppers on the bottom are not wearing out.

If there are any problems with your crutches or you need them replaced, contact your physiotherapy department.

You may want to clean your crutches. Use a soft cloth to wipe them. Do not use cleaning products.

Do not store your crutches in a place that gets below freezing.

This leaflet was compiled by the Patient Information Leaflet Group, NHS Lothian, Physiotherapy Services November 2008.

This leaflet should only be used by specific individuals following physiotherapy assessment. If you have any concerns, please speak to your physiotherapist.

Ref: Lothian.Crutches.Nov.2008

How to use crutches



A guide for patients

Stairs

Going up

- Hold on to the hand rail, if there is one
- Keep your crutch and “bad” leg on the same step
- The “good” leg goes up first and then your crutch and “bad” leg at the same time.

If you are non weight bearing do not put the “bad” leg down on the step.

Going down

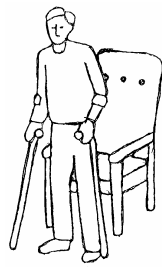
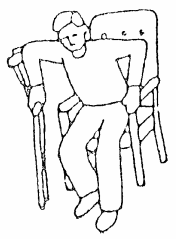
- Hold on to the hand rail, if there is one
- Put your crutch and “bad” leg on the step below
- Bring your “good” leg down to that step.

If you are non weight bearing do not put the “bad” leg down on the step.

Chairs

Getting up

- Shuffle to the front of the chair
- Put your crutches in front of you and slightly to the side
- Put your other hand on the arm of the chair
- Lean forward
- Push yourself up
- When you are standing put your arms through the loops on the crutches.



Sitting down

- Walk to your chair
- Using the crutches turn round in front of the chair
- Feel the chair behind your knees
- Remove both arms from the loops on your crutches
- Hold the crutches in one hand
- Place the other hand on the arm of the chair
- Lower yourself gently into the chair
- Rest the crutches by your side.