

Home Instructions for Crutch Use

MEASURING CRUTCHES

1. When standing up straight with the crutch tip approximately 4" in front of and to the sides of the feet, there should be a space of about 2-3 fingers between the armpits and the top of the crutches.
2. When standing up straight, hands grasping the handgrips, the elbows should be slightly bent
Armpits should NOT rest on the tops of the crutches during ambulation, as this may cause paralysis of the arms. Weight should be supported on the hands.

SWING THROUGH GAIT

1. Place both crutches approximately 6" in front of the body
2. Push on the hands and lift the body off the floor, straightening the elbows.
3. As the feet clear the floor, swing through the crutches, so that you land heels first 6 to 12 inches in front of the crutches.
4. Swing the body forward and again bring the crutches approximately 6 inches in front of you.
5. Repeat steps 1 through 4
6. You will be told how much weight you are allowed to put on the cast:
 - a. Non-weight Bearing: Hold the injured leg completely off the ground at all time. Do not put any weight on your leg
 - b. Partial Weight Bearing: Place the injured foot on the ground to as much weight as you are allowed up to 100%. If you are told to put 25%, 50%, etc weight on your leg, put the affected foot onto a scale and feel the amount of pressure to the percentage of your weight. (For example a 150lb person with 25% weight bearing would put their foot onto a scale and feel the amount of pressure to approximately 37lbs.)

GOING UP STAIRS

1. Face stairs and place the crutches close to the first step
2. Push on your hands, straightening the elbows and ducking the head. Place your uninjured leg on the first step.
3. Straighten the back and healthy leg, lifting both crutches and the injured leg up the same step. Be sure to place crutch tips securely on the step.

GOING DOWN STAIRS

1. Stand with the toes of the uninjured leg close to the edge of the step.
2. Lower both crutches and the injured leg onto the next step while bending the knee of the healthy leg. Be sure crutch tips are placed securely on the step.
3. Put weight on the hands and lower the body by placing the healthy leg on the lower step.