

WALKING WITH CRUTCHES

Instructions for patients

OBJECTIVE

It is important to learn a technique for walking with crutches that is easy and as normal as possible. Take equal steps with both feet and learn a regular walking rhythm. An incorrect technique will slow down recovery and is difficult to unlearn. It may also cause other musculoskeletal complaints.

CRUTCHES

The height of the crutches is correct when they are on the surface next to your feet and your elbows are almost straight and your shoulders relaxed.

If you need only one crutch, it should be on the side of the unaffected leg. You can reduce the weight on the sore leg by supporting yourself against the crutch.

In icy winter conditions, you should attach ice grips to your crutches. Check that the rubber tips and ice grips of your crutches are in good condition.



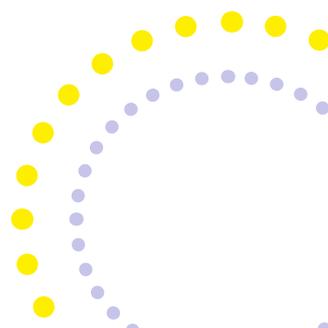
WALKING WITH CRUTCHES

PICTURE 1.

Move the crutches forward and take a step with the sore leg between the crutches.

Put weight on the sore leg according to the instructions and as the injury allows.

From now on, move the crutches and the sore leg forward together.





PICTURE 2.

Take a step by moving the unaffected leg past the sore leg.

Return to a normal walking rhythm as soon as possible: take equal steps with both legs and avoid limping and “hopping”.

PICTURE 3.

Walking up stairs:

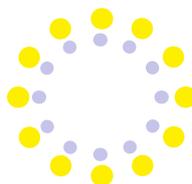
Keep your weight on the crutches and put the permitted amount of weight on the sore leg. Place the unaffected leg on the higher step and step up. Move the crutches and the sore leg next to the unaffected leg. Move up one stair at a time.



PICTURE 4.

Walking down stairs:

Keep your weight on the unaffected leg. Place the crutches and the sore leg on the lower step. Move the unaffected leg next to the sore leg. Move down one stair at a time.



WEIGHT-BEARING

Remember to ask the person treating you how much weight you can put on the sore leg. Only in exceptional cases will you be instructed not to put any weight on the sore leg. In most cases, weight can be put on the sore leg as permitted by pain. Even after a fracture, you will generally be permitted to allow the affected leg to take its own weight (about 15 kg). If possible, check how much weight you are putting on the leg using bathroom scales.

As you recover, you should put more weight on the affected leg and start using just one crutch, taking care not to limp. This will improve your recovery and help you return to normal walking. The ability to walk faster and run will come later.

