

FITTING CRUTCHES & PROPER TECHNIQUES

FITTING THE CRUTCHES

With the crutch tips 6 to 8 inches from your toes at a 45° angle

- The top of the crutch pad should be two to three finger widths from the axilla (arm pit).
- The handgrip should be at the level of your wrist, when your arm is relaxed along your side.

PROPER TECHNIQUES

TO GET UP FROM A CHAIR

- Hold both crutches on your affected side.
- Slide to the edge of the chair
- Push down on the arm of the chair on the good side
- Stand up, check your balance
- Put crutches under your arms, press into ribs

TO WALK WITH CRUTCHES

- Put crutches under your arms and press them into your ribs
- Move the crutches ahead of you 6 to 12 inches
- Push down on the hand grips as you step up to or slightly past the crutches
- Make sure to bear your weight on your hands, not under your arms
- Check your balance before you continue

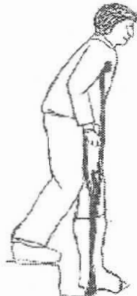
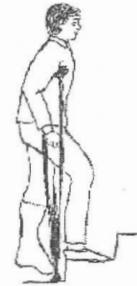
TO SIT DOWN IN A CHAIR

- Back up to the chair until you feel the chair on your legs
- Put both crutches in your hand on the affected side, reach back for the chair with the other hand
- Lower yourself slowly in to the chair, bending at your hips

HOW TO HANDLE THE STAIRS

TO GO UPSTAIRS

- Start close to the bottom step, and push down through your hands
- Step up to the first step, remembering that *the good foot goes up first!*
- Next, step up to the same step with the other foot, making sure to *keep the crutches with your affected limb!*
- Check your balance before you proceed to the next step
- Make sure someone is there to help if you need it



TO GO DOWN THE STAIRS

- Start at the edge of the step, keeping your hips beneath you
- *Slowly bring the crutches with your affected limb down to the next step (the bad foot goes down first!)*
- Be sure to bend at the hips and knees to prevent leaning too far forward, which could cause you to fall
- Check your balance before you continue
- Have help handy
- A handrail will make things easier for you. Simply hold both crutches on one side

SAFETY

Your balance will be diminished when using the crutches, so BE CAREFUL. Watch for slippery floors, loose rugs, carpeting, toys, little kids, pets, etc. Keep yourself safe.