

Using Crutches: Weight-Bearing

Tip: To keep from getting tired walk with your shoulder and back straight, head up, and your injured leg slightly bent

When you are told that you can put some weight on your injured leg, you'll use a weight-bearing gait. Do not use this gait until your health care provider says it's okay to do so. Start with "step to". Move on to "step through" when told you can.

Step To

1. Move your crutches forward about 12 inches.
2. Step forward with your injured leg. Land lightly between your crutches. Squeeze the crutches against your sides. Supporting your weight with your hands and injured leg, straighten your elbows.
3. Lift your good leg and step to the crutches. Land your good leg between your crutches.

Step Through

1. Move your crutches forward about 12 inches.
2. Step forward with your injured leg. Land lightly between your crutches. Squeeze the crutches against your sides. Support your weight with your hands and your injured leg. Straighten your elbows.
3. Lift your good leg and step forward through the crutches. Land your good leg about 12 inches in front of your crutches.

Walking with a Cane

Hold the cane in the hand opposite the injured leg. Keep the elbow close to the body and the hand close to the hip. Follow the principles listed above.

Using Crutches: Up and Down Steps

When climbing up and down steps, remember this rule: **Up with the good** (non-injured leg) and **down with the bad** (injured leg). Note: If you're non-weight-bearing, ask your health care provider for special instructions.

Up Stairs

1. Hold the handrail with one hand. Put both crutches in your other hand. Support your weight evenly between the handrail and your crutches.
2. Step up with your good leg. Get your balance before moving farther.
3. Bring your crutches and injured leg up.

Down Stairs

1. Hold the handrail with one hand. Put both crutches in your other hand
2. With your weight on your good leg, move your crutches down. Step down with your injured leg.
3. Support your weight evenly between the handrail and your crutches. Slowly bring your good leg down. Don't hop.