

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a person wearing white sneakers and dark socks, using two white crutches with black rubber tips on a light-colored floor.

# WALKING WITH CRUTCHES

## Before your surgery

- buy or rent crutches through the Emergency Department or from a local vendor
- practice using the crutches
- watch CHEO's crutch walking video on [cheo.on.ca](http://cheo.on.ca) to learn how to use crutches and make sure they are the right size

### Questions?

Call CHEO's Physiotherapy Clinic  
613-737-7600 ext. 2500  
Monday to Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## Crutch walking basics

- keep your crutches pressed against your rib cage
- support your weight with your hands not your armpits
- wear a good supportive shoe, with a non-skid sole
- take care in the rain, snow and ice – the rubber tips on the crutches may slip
- be careful around floor mats, or remove them if possible

## Sitting and standing Getting into a chair

1. Approach the chair.
2. Turn around so that the back of the good leg touches the chair.
3. Place both crutches in one hand and hold handles of the crutches.
4. Place your other hand on the chair, then lower yourself down to the chair slowly.

## Sitting with a long leg cast

1. Sit down by following the instructions for getting into a chair.
2. Lift the affected leg up onto a chair or footstool and distribute the weight evenly through your cast (not only on the heel).
3. If no chair or footstool is available, place a crutch under the cast and rest the cast on it only for a short time.

## Getting out of a chair

1. Slide yourself to the edge of the chair.
2. Place both crutches in one hand and hold handles of the crutches.
3. Push up from the chair with one hand, while using the other hand to push on the crutch handles. Stand up on your good leg.
4. Place a crutch under each arm once standing.

## Walking and stair climbing

### Non weight bearing

Do not put any weight on the affected leg. Support all weight with your good leg and your hands on the crutches.

### How to walk

Place crutches about one foot ahead of you. Place all the weight on your hands and swing your good leg slightly ahead of the crutches.

### Using stairs

It is safer to use a handrail. Start by putting both crutches on the side opposite the railing, or have someone carry one crutch for you.

### Going up

Support your weight on the hand rail and the crutch handle.  
Lift the good leg onto next step.  
Lift the crutches and affected leg up to this level.

### Going down

Standing on the good leg, lower the crutches and the affected leg onto lower step.  
Place all the weight through your hands and bring the good leg down to this level.

### Feather weight bearing

Weight is shared between the crutches and good leg, with the affected foot just touching the ground. Follow the instructions for partial weight bearing, but just touch the floor lightly with the affected foot.

### Partial weight bearing

Your weight rests partly on the affected leg and partly on the crutches.

### How to walk

Place crutches approximately one foot ahead of you.  
Place the affected foot on the floor between the crutches.  
Keep your affected foot on the floor, then take a step past the crutches with your good leg.

### Using stairs

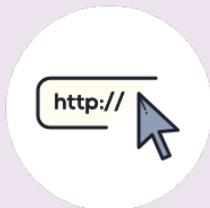
It is safer to use a handrail. Start by putting both crutches on the side opposite the railing, or have someone carry one crutch for you.

### Going up

Support your weight on the crutch handle, the handrail, and partly on the affected foot.  
Lift the good leg onto next step.  
Lift the affected leg and crutches up to this level, placing weight on both feet.

### Going down

Standing on the good leg, lower the crutches and affected leg onto the lower step.  
Transfer your weight to the crutch handles, stair railing and your affected foot.  
Bring the good leg down to the lower step.



## Need more information?

[Cheo.on.ca](http://cheo.on.ca) is the best place to find information on CHEO's programs and services and learn about a variety of health topics for children and youth. Visit our online resource section to access CHEO-recommended websites, books, apps, videos and more!