Crutch Walking

What is weight bearing?
“Weight bearing” means putting weight on your injured leg or foot. Your doctor will tell you if you may or may not put any body weight on your injured leg or foot. By keeping appropriate amount of weight off your injured leg or foot, you will protect it and give it time to heal.

Non-weight bearing: Your doctor may tell you to use the “non-weight bearing” method. This means you do not rest or walk with any pressure on the injured side. You should not put weight on your injured leg.

Touch down weight bearing: Your doctor may tell you to use the “touch down weight bearing” method. Touch down weight bearing means you can only touch the ball of your injured foot on the floor. It is like walking on eggshells.

Partial weight bearing: Your doctor may tell you to use the “partial weight bearing” method. This means you can put 30% to 50% of your body weight on your injured leg.

How can I use my crutches safely?
• The pressure or weight goes on your hands, not on your armpits. Nerve damage can result if you place weight on your armpits for a long time.
• Keep your elbows close to your sides to help keep the crutches against your chest.

• Your crutch tips should be 2 to 3 inches out to the side of your feet so you do not trip on your crutches.
• You should have a slight bend in your elbow when holding the crutches (a 15 to 20 degree bend).
• Take your time and do not try to walk too fast.
• Keep your head up and look ahead. Do not look at your feet when walking.
• For safety, make sure the crutch tips, grips and pads are in place before using them.
• When walking on carpet, you must pick up your crutches and injured leg more than when you walk on tile or linoleum floors. Put away all throw rugs to avoid falling.

Standing Up:
Put both crutches on your injured side. Lean forward and push off with your arm from the chair.

Sitting Down:
Remove the crutches and place both of them together on your injured side. Hold onto the handgrips with one hand. Use your other hand to hold onto the armrest or edge of the chair and slowly sit down.
Stairs:

Do not try to climb stairs or curbs until you have complete confidence in using your crutches. If you have to, for safety reasons, you can sit down and move up and down the steps. If you have a rail, put both crutches under one arm and hold onto the rail for safety.

Going up stairs with or without a railing:

• Keep the crutches on the step you are standing on.
• Support your weight between your crutches.
• Bring your good leg up to the next step. Let the injured leg trail behind.
• Straighten your good leg and bring the crutches up.

Getting Out Of a Car:

• Move to the side when opening the door.
• Ask that the front seat be moved back.
• Back up until you feel the edge of the seat. Grab the back rest with one hand and the hand grips of the crutches with the other.
• Tip your head to avoid bumping and sit down. Put your heel of your good leg on the frame and push back. Move across the seat until you can swing your injured leg into the car.

For more information or help, please contact your family doctor or call Telehealth at 1 (866) 797-0000.

Going down stairs:

• Put the crutches on the lower step while putting your injured foot forward.
• Support your weight between your crutches.
• Move your good foot to the lower step.