What is weight bearing?

“Weight bearing” means putting weight on your injured leg or foot. By keeping an appropriate amount of weight off your injured leg or foot, you will protect it and give it time to heal.

Your doctor will speak to you about how much of your body weight is safe to place on your injured leg or foot. Your doctor may tell you to use one of the following methods as your injured leg or foot heals:

Non-weight bearing: Do not put any weight on your injured leg. Do not rest or walk with any pressure on the injured side.

Touch down weight bearing: You can only touch the ball of your injured foot on the floor. It is like walking on eggshells.

Partial weight bearing: You can put 30% to 50% of your body weight on your injured leg.

How can I use my crutches safely?

• Properly fit your crutches by resting your arms over the crutches.
  • The tips of your crutches should be 2 to 3 inches out to the sides of your feet.
  • Your armpits should be 2 to 4 inches away from the crutch arm pad.
  • Your wrists should be even with the sides of the handgrips.

Your nurse or medical technician can adjust the arm pads and the handgrips before you leave the hospital.

To use the crutches:

• The pressure or weight goes on your hands.

  Do not put the pressure or weight 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. This helps keep the crutches against your chest.
• Keep your crutch tips 2 to 3 inches out to the side of your feet so you do not trip on your crutches.
• Slightly bend 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.

Put away all throw rugs to avoid falling. You must pick up your crutches and injured leg more often when walking on carpet compared to walking on tile or linoleum floors.
Standing Up:
1. Put both crutches on your injured side.
2. Lean forward and push off with your arm from the chair.

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

Getting Into a Car:
1. Move to the side when opening the door.
2. Ask that the front seat be moved back.
3. Turn around with your back facing the car, and 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.
4. Tip your head to avoid bumping and sit down. Put the heel of your good leg on the frame and push back.
5. 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.

Stairs:
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.

Do not try to climb stairs or curbs until you are fully confident in using your crutches.

Going up stairs (with or without a railing):
1. Keep the crutches on the step you are standing on.
2. Support your weight between your crutches.
3. Bring your good leg up to the next step. Let the injured leg trail behind.
4. Straighten your good leg and bring the crutches up.

Going down stairs:
1. Put the crutches on the lower step while putting your injured foot forward.
2. Support your weight between your crutches.
3. Move your good foot to the lower step.

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