

UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

University of Maryland, College Park



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Tips for Crutch Walking

1. Crutches should fit so loosely under your arm that, when standing erect, you can get 3 fingers between the top of the crutch and your armpit.
2. The hand piece should be adjusted so that, when holding it, your elbow has a slight bend.
3. Never lean on the tops of your crutches—doing so could cause nerve compression and pain. Always place your weight on your hands when walking.
4. If your doctor has told you that you may put some weight on your injured leg when walking, move that leg at the same time you move your crutches, sharing your body weight between the leg and the crutches.
5. When going up stairs, put your good foot up first and then bring up your crutches and injured leg.
6. When going down stairs, put your crutches and injured leg down.
7. When going up or down stairs, always lean forward, never backward to avoid loss of balance.
8. Use extra caution when walking on wet tile (kitchen or bathroom) floors. Remove throw rugs.
DON'T walk on grass or icy surfaces with crutches.

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