

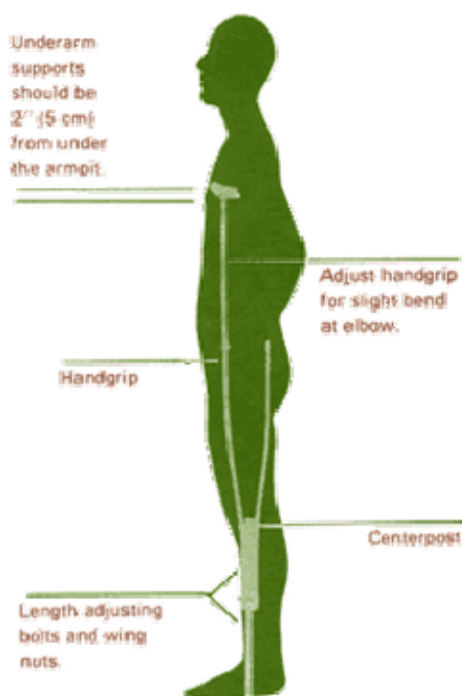
Fact Sheet

You and your crutches



Correct fit

- The child stands up straight and is measured from their armpit to the floor. To establish the required length for the crutches, deduct 5cm from this measurement.
- Adjust the handgrips so there is a slight bend at the elbow when standing in a relaxed manner.



Copyright VHI 1996

- You need to be standing up straight and balanced before trying to walk on your crutches. Your feet should be slightly apart. Your crutches need to be out to the side (10-15cm) and slightly in front of your feet.
- Grip the crutches firmly to your side by pressing your upper arms against your trunk.
- Move both crutches out in front of your body.
- Balance your weight on your hands and push down onto the crutch handle.
- Bring your good leg up to or just past the crutches, this will move you forward.
- Do not lean your armpits on the crutches.
- If you are not allowed to bear weight on your sore leg, keep it off the ground.
- If you are able to take partial weight, put your sore leg on the ground and take some weight through it and the rest through your hands.

Safety

- Ensure wing nuts are tight.
- Ensure crutch tips (rubber stoppers) are securely attached and not worn.

You are now ready to walk with your crutches as you have been shown. You will have been told you how much weight you can put on your sore leg.

Walking with crutches

- The top of each crutch should be 2-3 finger widths below your armpit. Lean on your hands not your armpits; your elbows should be slightly bent.

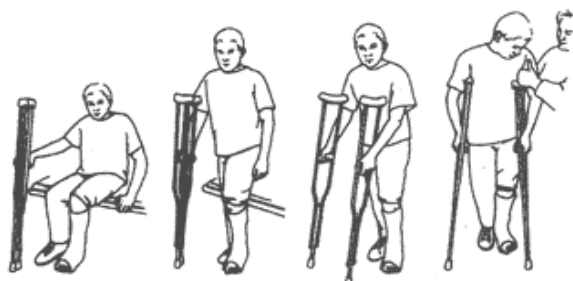
Fact Sheet

You and your crutches



Sitting down or standing up with crutches

- Hold the crutches in one hand, by the crutch handles.
- Place your sore leg forward.
- Grip the seat with the other hand.
- Lean forward, gently bend your good leg and lower yourself onto the seat, or gently straighten your good leg and push yourself up from the seat. Do not take any weight through your sore leg if you're not allowed to.



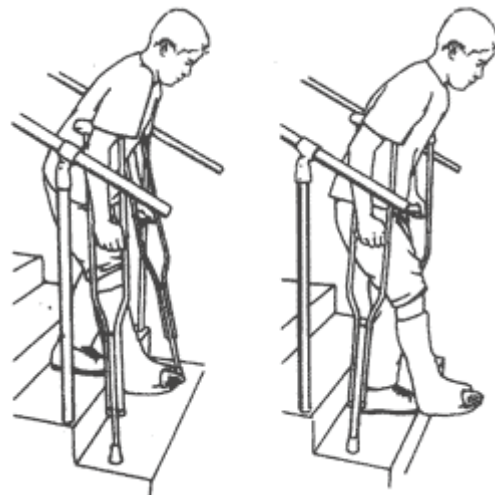
Copyright VHI 1996

Going up stairs

- Walk right up to the step.
- Push down through your hands and place your good leg on the first step.
- Lean on your good leg, and push down through your hands bringing your weight over the step.
- Bring your sore leg up onto the step.
- Bring your crutches up

Going down stairs

- Walk right to the edge of the step.
- Put your crutches down onto the step below
- Put your sore leg down onto the step below (don't take weight through your sore leg if you are not allowed).
- Make sure your weight is well balanced through your hands and then pushing down through the crutches lift yourself down, stepping onto your good leg.



Copyright VHI 1996

Remember

- Your weight should be on your hands, not on your armpits.
- Ask your physiotherapist or doctor how much weight you can put on your sore leg.
- Children learning to use crutches should be supervised by an adult, until they can use them safely.

This fact sheet is for education purposes only.
Please consult with your doctor or other health professional
to make sure this information is right for your child.

This document was reviewed on Thursday, 7th June 2007.

the
children's
hospital at Westmead

www.chw.edu.au

 **SYDNEY
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
RANDWICK

www.sch.edu.au


Kaleidoscope
HUNTER CHILDREN'S HEALTH NETWORK

www.kaleidoscope.org.au

