

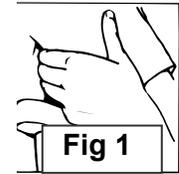
## Crutch Walking: Weight bearing as Tolerated

### How to use your crutches

#### Fitting crutches.

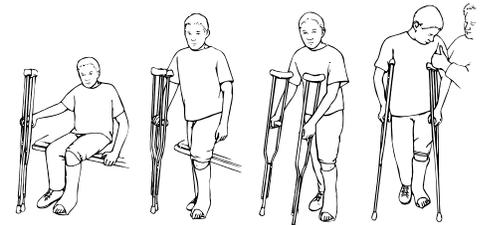
The top of the crutch should be 3 fingers width below the armpit. (See Fig 1).

- **Carry your weight on your hands.** Your armpits should **not** rest on top of the crutches.



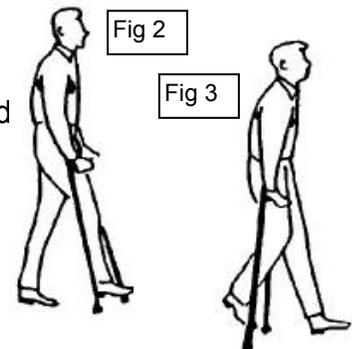
**Standing from a sit:** Put the crutches on your good side.

1. Put one hand on the handgrip of the crutches.  
Put your other hand on the seat or arm of the chair.
2. Push up to stand. Rest your bad leg on the ground; you can put as much pressure on your leg as tolerated.
3. If using crutches put them below each arm so that you carry your weight on your hands. You are ready to walk.



#### Walking with crutches. Weight bearing as tolerated or 3-point gait:

1. Move both crutches forward at the same time.
2. Push down on both crutches and then step with weight as tolerated through bad leg up to the crutches. (see Fig 2)
3. Step with your good leg past the crutches. (see Fig 3)
4. Repeat steps 1, 2, & 3.

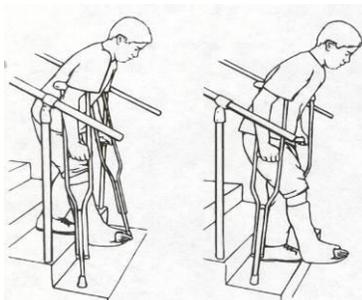
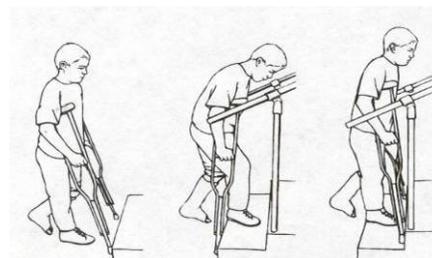


#### Going up and down stairs using crutches

Always take one step at a time. If the stairs have a railing, you may hold onto the rail with one hand and use the crutch(es) with your opposite arm.

#### Going up stairs:

1. Step up with the good foot.
2. Step up with the bad foot.
3. Bring the crutches up.



Photos courtesy of VHI

#### Going down stairs:

1. Place the crutches on the step down.
2. Step down with the bad foot.
3. Step down with the good foot.

## **Going up and down stairs without using crutches**

Use this method when the stairs are unsafe or if you are afraid to use your crutches.

- **To go upstairs:** Sit on the stairs and bend your good leg. Put your hands on the next step higher. Push with your hands and good leg to lift your bottom up to the next step.
- **To go downstairs:** Sit on the stairs. Put your good foot on the next step down. Keep your hands on the same step as your bottom. Push with your hands and good leg and slide your bottom down to the next step.

## **Safety Tips**

- Watch out for slippery floors, water puddles, ice, snow and other slippery places.
- Throw rugs are unsafe. They easily catch on the tips of your crutches or cane.
- Be careful when walking on gravel and grass.
- Wear a good tie shoe with a flat sole or tennis shoes when using crutches or a cane.
- Check the rubber tip of the crutches or cane for cracks or excessive wear. A new one can normally be bought at a drug store, discount store, or medical supply company.

**ALERT:** Call your child's therapist, doctor, or nurse if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

**This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.**