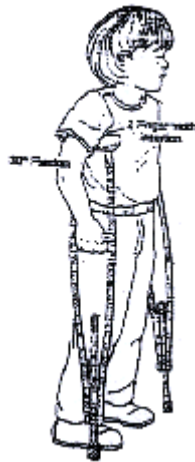




### **CRUTCH WALKING: NON-WEIGHT BEARING**

Your child has been given crutches to provide for walking without weight on the affected leg. The crutches are used so your child can walk without injuring the leg.

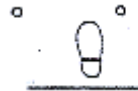
### **GETTING READY FOR WALKING**



The crutches must be fitted to your child. Rubber hand grips, underarm pads and foot caps must be placed on the crutches. Crutches should be held slightly wider than child's shoulders. The crutches should be adjusted to a length that would permit an adult to place two fingers between the child's underarm and the top of the crutch with the pads in place. This extra room prevents pressure to a nerve that runs under the arm. Pressure to this nerve could cause injury. The hand grips should be adjusted to be in line with your child's wrist, when the arm is hanging at his side. When your child is walking, the elbow should be slightly bent when using the hand grips such as in the picture.

### **TEACHING YOUR CHILD TO WALK USING CRUTCHES**

Beginning position



Move both crutches six inches to eight inches in front of the child



Bear weight on the crutches and hop with the good foot forward



### **TEACHING YOUR CHILD TO USE STAIRS**

Place the good foot on the step. Carefully raise the bad foot and crutches to that step. To go down the stairs, lower the bad foot and the crutches and follow with the good foot. You should walk behind your child when going up stairs and walk in front of the child going down stairs. If using the crutches for stairs is too difficult for your child, he or she may sit down on the step and scoot up each step using his or her hands and good foot to lift his or her bottom from step to step.

### **TEACHING YOUR CHILD TO GET UP AND SIT DOWN IN A CHAIR**

Place the chair against the wall so it does not move. Place the child's good leg against the seat of the chair. Place one crutch at the child's side and hold by the hand grips with the other hand placed on the arm of a chair. Your child can rise from the seated position by pushing up on the hand grip of the crutch and the arm of the chair. Your child can sit down by lowering himself with his good leg and holding on to the hand grip of one crutch and the arm of the chair for support.

### **WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR**

If your child is not safely able to use the crutches after several practice sessions with you, you should call the doctor that asked your child to use crutches. He or she will be able to refer you to a physical therapist in the rehabilitative services department at The Children's Medical Center for further teaching. You also should call your doctor if your child complains of any numbness, tingling or loss of sensation in either arm or hand.

### **SAFETY TIPS FOR USING CRUTCHES**

Encourage your child to go slowly. Do not let your child step ahead of the crutches with the good foot or to swing through them. Be aware of electrical cords, water or toys on the floor, throw rugs, the corner of the bedspread and the family pet. All of these could cause tripping. Do not allow your child to hang from the crutches; this could cause pressure to the nerve in the underarm area. Check the treads on the crutch tips periodically to make sure they do not become slippery. Check all the screws on the crutches every couple of days, they become loose very easily.

***The information contained in this handout is for general information only and should not be considered complete. For specific information on crutch walking, please ask your doctor.***

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