

# Using Crutches

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## How to fit crutches to your child

1. Place the crutches under your child's arms against their ribs.
2. Adjust the height of the crutch to fit 2 to 3 finger widths between the pad of the crutch and your child's armpit.
3. Have your child drop their arms to the side of the crutch. The grip should come to wrist level or 1 to 2 inches above.
4. Your child should be able to stand comfortably with their hands on the grips and a slight bend in their elbow.

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## Getting up from a chair

1. Hold both crutches on your affected side and place your other hand on the seat surface.
2. Push yourself up to a stand using your good leg and hand on the seat.
3. Once you are standing, secure the crutches under each arm.

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## Sitting down

1. Back up to the surface you are going to sit on until it is against your legs.
2. Put both crutches in your hand on the affected side. Then reach back for the surface with your other hand.
3. Reach back to the surface you are sitting on and lower yourself down slowly and gently.

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## How to walk with crutches

1. Place the crutch tips 6 to 8 inches out from the tips of your toes.
  2. Bear your weight through your hands on the grips and take a step or hop forward on your good leg.
  3. Check your balance before you continue.
  4. Have someone nearby watching you until you are safe and steady.
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### To Learn More

- Physical Therapy  
206-987-2113
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- [seattlechildrens.org](http://seattlechildrens.org)

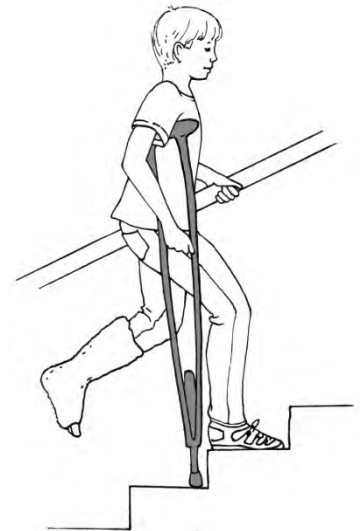
### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

### Going up stairs

1. Stand close to the bottom step and place your weight through the hand grips. If possible, put your cast side on the same side as the railing. Hold on to the railing with your hand on your cast side. Use the crutch on the other side. Take a step up the first step on your good leg and set your balance.
2. Bring the crutches up onto the step along with your affected leg. If you are not allowed to put any weight on your affected leg, keep that leg off the step.
3. Check your balance before taking the next step.

When helping your child go up stairs, stand behind (downhill) them. Put your hands gently on their hips or loosely on the gait belt. Support them only if they are losing their balance forward or backward.



### Going down stairs

1. Start at the edge of the step bending slightly forward at the hips.
2. Place the crutches on the step below along with the affected leg.
3. Bear your weight on the hand grips and step down with your good leg. Check your balance before going onto the next step.

If the stairs have a railing, it is safer to use one crutch and the railing.



### General tips

- Be aware of loose rugs or wet areas.
- Avoid hiking up your shoulders as you press down on the grips, and take a step forward. Keep your shoulders relaxed.
- Be sure to bear weight through your hands on the hand grips. Do not bear weight through your armpits while walking or resting.
- Check the condition of the crutch tips for wear and tear often. Contact your local pharmacy for replacement parts.