

700 Children's Drive  
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nationwidechildrens.org

## CRUTCH WALKING

Crutches may be used to keep weight off a leg or foot while it is healing. Your doctor, nurse, or physical therapist will check one of the weight-bearing instructions below:

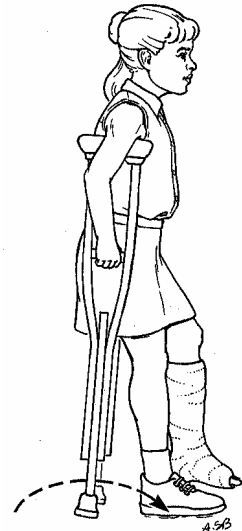
- "NWB" – Non-Weight-Bearing.....** Do not put **any weight** on the injured foot or leg.
- "TDWB" – Touch-Down Weight-Bearing.** The foot may rest on the floor very lightly, but **NO** weight through the leg.
- "PWB" – Partial Weight-Bearing.....** You may put some weight on the foot.
- "WBAT" –Weight-Bearing As Tolerated...** You may put as much weight on your leg/foot as you are comfortable with.



**Picture 1** Stand straight, shoulders relaxed. Hold the crutches under your arms. Place them a little more than shoulder width apart. Hold the hand grips. Keep your elbows slightly bent. Keep the sore leg out in front.



**Picture 2** Move the crutches forward slightly ahead of your "good" foot while keeping your balance on your good leg.



**Picture 3** With the crutches firmly on the floor, push down on your hands and hop forward on your good leg.

- The height of the crutches should be adjusted so that there is space for two fingers between your armpit and the crutch pad.
- Your weight should be on the palms of your hands and not on your underarms. Always push down with your hands, and try not to lean on the underarm pieces because this can cause tingling and numbness in your arms or hands.
- Make sure you have rubber safety tips on the bottom of the crutches. The safety tips keep you from slipping. Check the rubber tips every few days. Replace the tips if they show signs of wear.

## STAIRS WITH CRUTCHES

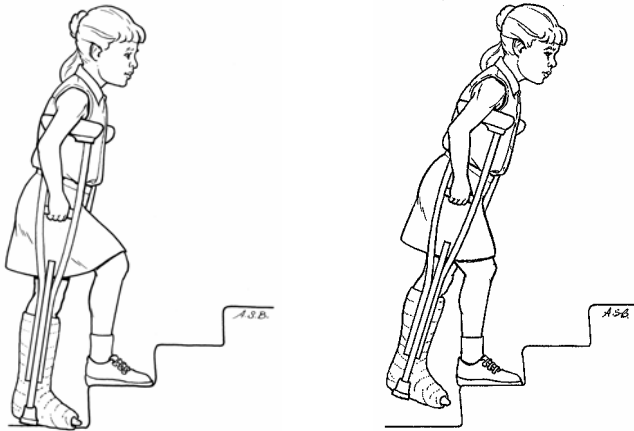
- **“Up with the Good, Down with the Bad.”** (Crutches always stay with the sore leg.)
- **To go up stairs:** Keep your sore leg and the crutches on the ground. Push down with your hands and hop up onto the step with your good leg. Then bring the sore leg and crutches up on the step (Pictures 4 and 5). Repeat.
- **To go down stairs:** Face the stairs. Put the crutches on the step and then your sore leg on the same step. Push down with your hands. Bend your good knee to lower yourself to the next step. Hop down to the step on your good foot (Pictures 6 and 7). Repeat.

## SCOOTING ON STAIRS

You can also “scoot” up or down the stairs on your bottom. For safety have someone help you with your sore leg.

- **To “scoot” up stairs:** Turn around and sit on a lower step. Use your arms and good leg to push yourself up the stairs, one step at a time.
- **To “scoot” down stairs:** Sit down away from the edge of the top step. Scoot forward and use your arms and good leg to lower yourself down the steps, one at a time.

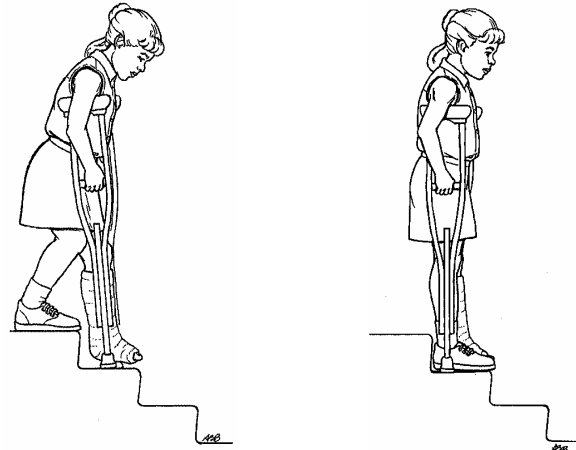
UP



**Picture 4** Stand with your good foot on the first step and the sore one on the floor with the crutches.

**Picture 5** Push down with your hands and hop up on your good leg.

DOWN



**Picture 6** Put tips of crutches on lower step. You may rest sore leg on step if TDWB or PWB. *Do not put cast on step if NWB.*

**Picture 7** Push down with your hands. Lower yourself to the next step.

## FOLLOW-UP

- It’s a good idea for parents to talk to the child’s school and ask if the child can be released 5 minutes early from classes to allow time to get to the next class or the school bus.
- Call your doctor or the Orthopedic Clinic at (614) 722-5175 to make an appointment.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your physical therapist or nurse, or call

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