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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Using your crutches - some helpful hints for children and teenagers (page 1 of 2)

This leaflet will help remind you how to use your crutches safely.

Safety first!

- the physiotherapist (physio) will check the ferrules (rubber part on the bottom of the crutch); these should have a pattern on them. If these wear down with use, they should be replaced. Please tell your physio if the pattern has worn down.
- when you stand up tall with your shoes on, your elbow should be a little bent and your shoulders should be relaxed when your hands are on the crutches.
- your physio will measure the crutches so that they are the right size for you. Please do not alter the height without first talking to your physio.

How to use the crutches

Standing up and sitting down

Do not stand up (or sit down) whilst your arms are still in the cuffs of your crutches. Doing so could make you fall over! When standing up or sitting down always have one hand on the chair or bed you are sitting on.

Place your arms into the crutches once you are standing and take them out before sitting down.

Non-weight bearing

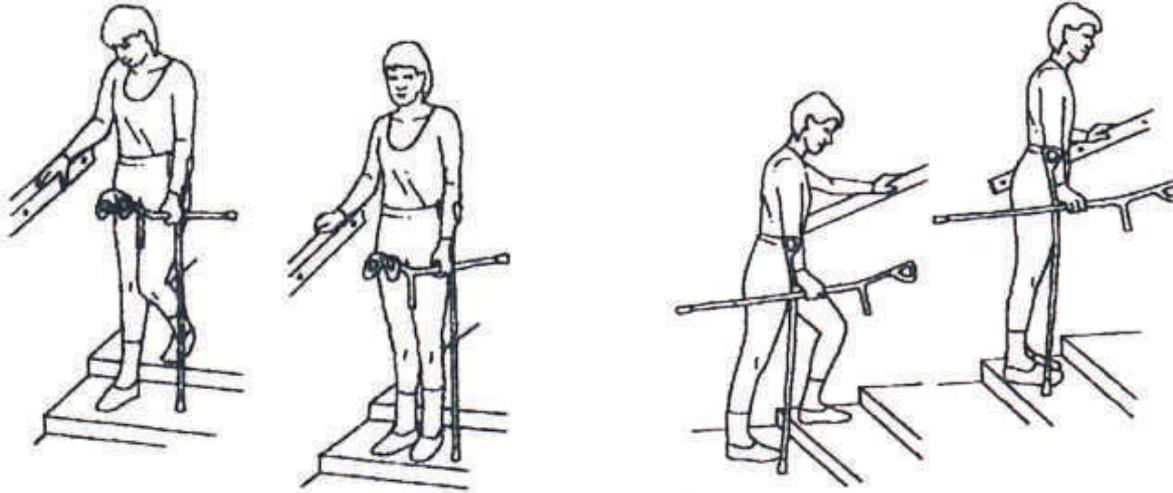
If you need to walk without putting any weight on your bad leg, move the crutches forward and then push down on the crutches and hop forward on your good leg, keeping your bad leg off the floor and your weight on your good leg and crutches at all times.

Partial-weight bearing

Bring the crutches forward evenly, keeping your injured leg off the ground. Lean forward, putting your weight on your hands against the grips of the crutches. Swing your good leg forward, placing your foot just in front of the crutches. As you are taking weight through your arms and crutches you will be reducing the weight through your injured leg.

Children's Physiotherapy
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Using stairs



Always use a hand rail if it is available as this will be the safest way to go up or downstairs.

When toe-touch or partial weight bearing, stand with both feet on the floor and move the crutches forward stepping between the crutches with the bad leg.

Going up, get close to the stairs. Hop up with the good leg, then bring the crutches and the injured leg up to the stair that the good leg is on. Repeat.

Going down, first bring the crutches and the injured leg down to the lower step, then step down with the good leg. Repeat. If there is a handrail, use the handrail and one crutch in the opposite hand. Ask someone to carry your other crutch, or you can hold it as in the picture above.

Remember - "up with the good, down with the bad". Push down on the crutches with your arms and put a bit of weight on your bad leg while stepping forward with the good leg.

Taking care of yourself while using crutches

- going through doorways - give yourself enough room to allow your feet and crutches to clear the door. After opening the door, block it from swinging closed with a crutch tip. Walk through the doorway
- be careful not to slip on water, ice or fallen leaves.
- if your hands get tired or sore, wear padded cycle or skateboard gloves.
- your crutches may fall over less if you store them up-side-down.
- when you are out and about, use a bum bag or back pack rather than carrying a bag.

What should I do with the crutches when I have finished with them?

When you are told the good news that you no longer need to use your crutches, please remember to take them back to the Physiotherapy Department or Orthopaedic Outpatients so that they are available when other patients need them.