



## **Crutch Training**

### **Weight Bearing:**

It is important you follow your doctor's orders and put only the amount of weight shown below on the affected side:

- Full weight bearing
- Partial weight bearing
- Toe-touch weight bearing
- Non-weight bearing
- Follow these orders until you are re-evaluated by your doctor or told differently by your treating physical therapist.

### **Getting Started:**

- Make sure all of the pads and grips are securely in place and the hardware is tight.
- Clean out the tips of the crutches to make sure they are free of dirt and stones. If they wear out, contact us for a replacement set.
- Remove all small and/or loose rugs from your walkways at home to avoid falls.
- Have someone nearby to help you until you are steady.

### **Proper Technique:**

*To get up from a chair:*

- Hold both crutches on your affected side.
- Slide to the edge of the chair.
- Push down on the arm of the chair on the unaffected side.
- Stand up, checking your balance.
- Put your crutches under your arm, pressing them into your ribs.

*To walk with crutches:*

- Put the crutches under your arms and press them into your ribs.
- Move crutches ahead of you 6-12 inches.
- Push down on the handgrips as you step up to or slightly past the crutches.
- Make sure to bear your weight on your hands, not under your arms.
- Check your balance before you continue.

*To sit down in a chair:*

- Back up to the chair until you feel the chair on your legs.
- Put both crutches in your hand on the affected side, reaching back for the chair with the other hand.
- Lower yourself slowly into the chair, bending at your hips.

*To go up the stairs:*

- Start close to the bottoms of the step.
- Push down through your handgrips and step up to the first step with the unaffected leg leading.
- Bring the crutches and the affected leg up together to the step you are on.
- Check your balance before you proceed to the next step.
- Repeat for each step.
- Make sure someone is there to help if you need it, having him/her stand on your affected side, one to two steps behind you.

*To go down the stairs:*

- Start at the edge of the step, keeping your hips beneath you.
- Slowly bring the crutches with your affected leg down to the next step, lowering yourself with your unaffected leg.
- Be sure to bend at the hips and knees to prevent loss of balance.
- Check your balance before proceeding to the next step.
- Make sure someone is there to help if you need it, having him/her stand on your affected side, one to two steps in front of you.
- If a handrail is available, using the handrail on one side and both crutches on the other side may make stair negotiation easier for you.