

How to use crutches after your foot operation

Department of Podiatric Surgery

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Information for Patients

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Why have I been given crutches?

You have been given crutches because either you have asked for them, or the podiatric surgery team feel that you should use them if you are not steady on your feet after your foot operation or have had a number of operations. Crutches should also be used if you have had an anaesthetic injection into the back of your leg (popliteal block). This type of anaesthetic reduces your muscle strength and power for a short period of time.

Fitting and using the crutches

The podiatric surgery team will let you know how long you need to use crutches; this is usually between 2 and 8 weeks after your operation, depending upon the type of operation that you have had.

Height

It is important that the crutches are the correct height for you. We will fit the crutches so that they are the right height for you, but we will also show you how to adjust them if you feel that the fit is not right:

- Stand upright, with your shoulders relaxed and your arms hanging loosely at your sides
- The height of the handgrips should be at the crease of your wrist when your arm is straight
- Your elbow should be bent approximately 30° when you hold the handgrips

Arm cuff

- The cuff should be 1 to 2 inches (3 to 5 cms) below the bend of the elbow

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or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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Making changes to the leg length and cuff with the spring pin alteration

- Press the 2 pins in
- Push the leg as if to shorten
- Turn the leg slightly
- Extend the leg to the required position, turn and re-locate the pins into the right holes
- Check pins are fully located before use
- Ensure that both crutches are adjusted the same

Standing, sitting down and walking

Use a chair with a high seat and arms to help you sit and stand up:

- **To stand up:** Sit at the front of the chair. Keep the operated foot in front of you and both crutches in one hand forming an “H”. Hold both crutches in the hand on your good leg side. Using the arm of the chair and the crutches, push yourself up and stand onto the good leg and heel of operated foot. Once standing, take one crutch in each hand and place your arms inside the cuffs of the crutches.
- **To sit down:** Back up to a sturdy chair. Remove both arms from the crutches and place them both into one hand on your good leg side, forming an ‘H’ shape. Put your operated foot in front of you and use that hand to feel for the seat/armrest of your chair. Slowly lower yourself into the chair.
- **To walk:** You can walk on the heel of the foot that has been operated on. Move the crutches one pace (arms length) forward. Place the heel of the operated foot onto the ground, just behind the level of the crutches. Using the crutches and heel to support your body weight bring your good foot forward and place it onto the ground.

Stairs

We recommend that **you do not use stairs** whilst you cannot put your foot flat on the ground and while you are using crutches.

General safety

Please note, the maximum user weight is **160kg or 25 stone**

- Make your area safe—remove loose rugs or objects on the floor which may trip you up
- Make sure there is enough light to see where you are going
- Wear a flat supportive shoe on the good foot (non–operated foot)
- Avoid wet floors or icy paths
- Take care when walking with the crutches especially on laminate flooring or smooth surfaces as these can be slippery

- Check all parts of the crutches regularly for damage and wear. Let us know if you find any issues
- Beware outdoors — uneven surfaces, wet leaves and ice may cause you to slip or trip
- Clean the crutches regularly with mild disinfectant
- Do not store in temperatures below zero degrees as this can damage the crutches

Where do I return the crutches to?

Please return the crutches either to the day surgery unit where you had your operation or give them back at your outpatient appointment.

Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to get in contact with the podiatric surgery team (Mon to Fri, 08:30 am to 4:30pm).

Rutland Memorial Hospital

Main reception: 01572 722552 (option 8 for outpatient appointments)

Melton Mowbray Hospital

Main reception: 01664 854800. Day surgery unit: 01664 854904

Loughborough Hospital

Main reception: 01509 611600 Day surgery unit: 01509 564406

Hinckley & District Hospital

Main reception: 01455 441800 Day surgery unit: 01455 441845

Outpatient appointments: 01455 441876

Market Harborough Hospital (St Luke's Treatment Centre)

Main reception: 01858 410500

Outpatient appointments: 01858 438135

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Previous reference:

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