



SPECTRUM MEDICAL

How to Use a Walker

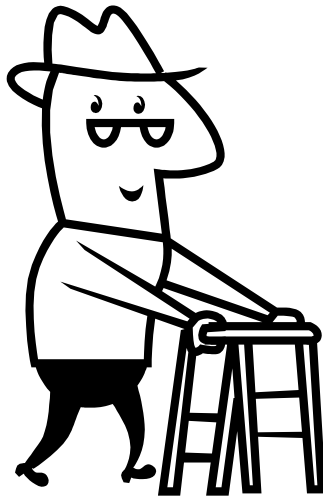
If you ever break a bone in your leg or foot, have a surgical procedure on your lower limb, or suffer a stroke, you may need to use crutches, a cane, or a walker. In the beginning, everything you do may seem difficult. But, with a few tips and some practice, you will gain confidence and learn to use your walking aid safely.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO YOU BY YOUR PHYSICIAN!

General Guidelines

- Remove scatter rugs, electrical cords, spills, and anything else that may cause you to fall.
- In the bathroom, use nonslip bath mats, grab bars, a raised toilet seat, and a shower tub seat.
- Simplify your household to keep the items you need handy and everything else out of the way.
- Use a backpack, fanny pack, apron, or briefcase to help you carry things around.

Walkers



- If you have had total knee or hip joint replacement surgery, or you have another significant problem, you may need more help with balance and walking than you can get with crutches or a cane. A pickup walker with four solid prongs on the bottom may give you the most stability. The walker lets you keep all or some of your weight off of your lower body as you take your steps. You use your arms to support some of the weight. The top of your walker should match the crease in your wrist when you stand up straight. Do not hurry when you use a walker. As your strength and endurance get better, you may gradually be able to carry more weight in your legs.

Walking

- First, put your walker about one step ahead of you, making sure the legs of your walker are level to the ground. With both hands, grip the top of the walker for support and walk into it, stepping off on your injured leg. Touch the heel of this foot to the ground first, then flatten the foot and finally lift the toes off the ground as you complete your step with your good leg. Don't step all the way to the front bar of your walker. Take small steps when you turn.

Sitting

- To sit, back up until your legs touch the chair. Reach back to feel the seat before you sit. To get up from a chair, push yourself up and grasp the walker's grips. Make sure the rubber tips on your walker's legs stay in good shape.

Stairs

- Never try to climb stairs or use an escalator with your walker.

