

Weight Bearing As Tolerated (WBAT) Patient Handout

Your physician has decided that you are to be **weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT)** on your surgical/ injured leg. It is important to adhere to these weight-bearing instructions to avoid disrupting the healing process. Your physical therapist can help answer any questions about use and proper fit of your crutches.

Weight Bearing As Tolerated (WBAT): You are allowed to place as much weight through your leg as you are comfortable with. Placing weight as tolerated is important to prevent your leg muscles from weakening.

General Instructions and Tips:

- Use your crutches for all walking and standing activities until your physician instructs otherwise
- Never lean on your crutches through your armpits- this can cause nerve damage
- Place weight through the crutches by pushing through your hands on the crutch handles.

Set Up and Fitting:

- Standing up straight with your arms at your side, the crutch handle should align with the inside of your wrist
- The height of the crutch should be adjusted so that there is 1-2 inches of space between the top of the crutch and your armpit (this is roughly the width of two fingers)



Walking:

1. Place both crutches 1-2 inches to the outside of each leg, and 6-12 inches in front of you and move your surgical/ injured leg forward
2. Step your non-surgical/ non-injured leg so that it lands in front of both crutches. You can push through your hands to help take weight off your leg as needed.



Standing Up:

1. Scoot forward in the chair
2. Hold both crutches in one hand, on the side of your surgical/ injured leg
3. Place both feet flat on the ground and your free hand on the armrest (or seat) of the chair
4. Lean forward at your hips, tighten your core, and then push down through both hands and both feet in order to stand
5. Once standing and steady, place one crutch under each arm



Sitting Down:

1. Back up to the chair so the back of your thighs are touching it
2. Hold both crutches in the hand on your surgical/ injured leg side
3. Reach back slowly with your free hand until you feel the armrest (or seat) of the chair)
4. Slowly lower yourself to the chair



Going up Steps/ Curbs:

1. Step up with your non- surgical/ injured leg by pushing through your hands as needed
2. Shift your weight onto your non-surgical/non-injured leg and bring both crutches and your surgical/injured leg up onto the step
3. Repeat until you reach the top

**If there is a railing available, you can hold both crutches on the opposite side of the railing and grab the railing with your free hand. Push through the railing and crutches, step up with your non-surgical/ non-injured leg and then bring crutches up.



Going Down Steps/ Curbs:

1. Lower both crutches down to the step below
2. Lower your surgical/injured leg down to the same step as the crutches
3. Push through your hands as needed and bring your non-surgical/ non-injured leg down to meet the crutches
4. Repeat until you reach the bottom

**If there is a railing available, you can hold both crutches on the opposite side of the railing and grab the railing with your free hand. Lower the crutches down, push through the railing and crutches, step down with your non-surgical/ non-injured leg.

