Gait Training with Crutches (NWB)

Walking with a Device
The following program has been designed to help you learn how to use your walking device. Remember:

- Walking paths within the home should be clear of cords and throw rugs.
- Wear comfortable shoes that have rubber soles.
- Watch for pets that have not seen you use a device before.
- Look for wet spots on the floor that may be slippery.

Gait Training with Crutches
- With one crutch under each arm, move both crutches forward.
- Push down with your arms on the crutches and, with your _________ leg bent behind you or out in front of you, step past your crutches with the good leg.
- Your _________ leg needs to remain OFF the floor at all times to be sure it is not bearing any weight.

Stand up tall.
Do not lean on your crutches.
Getting Up and Down from a Chair with Crutches

Getting up:
- Slide forward in your chair. Slide your _____________ leg forward and put both crutches on one side. Lean forward and push off from the chair with one arm on the chair and the other arm on the crutches. Be sure that your _____________ leg remains OFF the ground at all times!

Sitting down:
- Get close enough to the chair that you can feel it against the back of your legs. Place both crutches on one side and hold on to the hand grips with one hand. Reach back with the other hand for the armrest or edge of the chair and slowly sit down. Be sure that your _____________ leg remains OFF the ground at all times!
Going Up and Down Stairs with a Rail

**Going up:**
- With one crutch under each arm, come up close to the stairs.
- Place both crutches under the arm opposite the rail. Keep the crutches on the ground.
- Bend your _____________ leg behind you.
- Pushing with your arms on the crutches and the rail, bring your good leg up to the next step.
- Bring the crutches up to the next step. **Be sure that your _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!**
- Repeat this sequence until you are at the top of the stairs.

![Diagram of going up stairs with a rail]

**Going down:**
- Come close to the edge of the stairs.
- Place both crutches under the arm opposite the rail.
- Place your _____________ leg out in front of you.
- Lower both crutches to the step below you.
- Push on the crutches and the rail as you lower your good leg to the step below.
- **Be sure that your _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!**
- Repeat this sequence until you are at the bottom of the stairs.

![Diagram of going down stairs with a rail]
Going Up and Down Stairs with Crutches without a Rail

**Going up:**
- With one crutch under each arm, come up close to the stairs.
- Bend your _____________ leg behind you.
- Pushing with your arms on the crutches, bring your good leg up to the next step.
- Bring the crutches up to the next step. **Be sure that your _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!**
- Repeat this sequence until you are at the top of the stairs.

**Going down:**
- Come close to the edge of the stairs with one crutch under each arm.
- Place your _____________ leg out in front of you.
- Lower both crutches to the step below you.
- Push on the crutches as you lower your good leg to the step below.
- **Be sure that your _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!**
- Repeat this sequence until you are at the bottom of the stairs.

Going Up and Down a Curb Step with Crutches

**Going up:**
- With one crutch under each arm, come up close to the curb.
- Bend your _____________ leg behind you.
- Push with both arms on the crutches as you lift your good leg onto the step. Straighten your good leg.
- Bring the crutches up to the step.
- **Be sure that the _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!**
**Going down:**
- Come forward to the edge of the step.
- Place the crutches down onto the ground.
- Place your _____________ leg in front of you.
- Push with both arms on the crutches as you lower your good leg to the ground.
- Be sure that the _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!

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**Scooting Up and Down Stairs**

**Going up:**
- Place one hand on the rail and sit down on the step.
- Place both hands on the stair above you and straighten your _____________ leg in front of you.
- Use your arms and good leg to push yourself onto the stair above you.
- Repeat the sequence until you are at the top of the stairs.
**Going down:**
- Come forward to the edge of the step.
- Place the crutches down onto the ground.
- Place your _____________ leg in front of you.
- Push with both arms on the crutches as you lower your good leg to the ground.
- Be sure that the _____________ leg stays OFF the ground at all times!

![Diagram of going down stairs]

**Notes**
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**Health Information Resources**
For more information, visit Northwestern Memorial Hospital’s Alberto Culver Health Learning Center. This state-of-the-art health library is located on the 3rd floor of the Galter Pavilion. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Center by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nm.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.