PERIOPERATIVE SERVICES

Patient Information Sheet Crutch Walking

☐ NON-WEIGHT BEARING

No weight is taken through the affected leg. All weight is taken by the crutches and good leg.

1. Place crutches about 1 foot ahead of you
2. Push down on hand grips with your hands
3. Swing affected leg through
4. Hop with good leg slightly ahead of crutches

## Stairs

**Going up** (Good foot goes up first)

1. Approach stairs
2. Push down hard on hand grips of crutches
3. Hop onto next stair with good foot
4. Lift crutches up to this step bringing affected leg up

**Going down** (bad foot goes down first)

1. Place crutches on lower step
2. Place affected leg ahead of you
3. Push down hard on hand grip of crutches
4. Hop down to level of crutches

☐ PARTIAL WEIGHT BEARING

Up to 50% of your weight is allowed through your affected leg. The remaining weight is taken through your hands on the hand grips of the crutches.

1. Place crutches approximately 1 foot ahead of you
2. Place affected foot between crutches
3. Bring good leg TO MEET affected leg (steps 2 & 3 can be combined). You can place your good leg ahead of the affected leg once you are used to your crutches.

## Stairs

**Going up** (Good foot goes up first)

1. Approach stairs
2. Life good leg onto next step
3. Lift affected leg on step
4. Follow with crutches

**Going down** (bad foot goes down first)

1. Place crutches on lower step
2. Place affected leg on lower step
3. Follow with good leg

☐ FEATHER WEIGHT BEARING

Weight is shared between the crutches and good leg, with the affected foot just touching the ground. Proceed as for partial weight bearing, remembering to just lightly touch the floor with the affected foot.

HELPFUL HINTS

* Never lean over the tops of your crutches so that your armpits rest on the crutches. This can put pressure on the nerves to your arms.
* Keep crutches pressed against your rib cage.
* **Getting out of a chair**

Place both crutches in 1 hand and hold over hand grip

Push off chair with other hand and good leg, as well as pushing on crutches

Once standing, place a crutch under each arm

* **Getting into a chair**

Turn around so that the back of your good leg touches the chair

Place both crutches in 1 hand, holding over hand grips

Lower yourself into the chair with the other hand

* **Getting into and out of bed**: Same as 3 & 4. Swing both legs onto bed
* Sitting with a long leg cast

Rest cast on a chair facing you

If chair unavailable: place crutch under the cast & rest cast on it

* **Getting into and out of a car**

Lower the car window so you have something to hold onto when sitting and follow steps 3 & 4

Swing legs into car, or sit with both legs on back seat

* Wear supportive shoes.

PREVENTING COMPLICATIONS

After an injury, you may have pain and swelling. You can be at increased risk of developing a blood clot or deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in your affected leg. A DVT can be dangerous if it breaks loose and travels to your lungs; this is called a pulmonary embolism (PE).

* Although you might still have pain from your injury, staying active is key for preventing a blood clot from forming
* Wear loose clothing
* Do not sit, stand or lay down for prolonged periods of time
* Being overweight and smoking increases your risks of blood clots

**Seek immediate medical attention** with signs of a blood clot:

**C**hest pain

**L**ight-headedness

**O**ut of breath or coughing blood

 Leg **T**enderness *(new or worse)*

 Leg **S**welling *(new or worse)*

**Go to your closest Emergency Department right away if you have these symptoms.**