

Gloucestershire Community Equipment Service

How to use crutches

The Integrated Community Equipment Service provides equipment for Gloucestershire residents to remain in their own homes, achieving and maintaining independence in daily living tasks and to support carers. The service is contracted to and supplied by GIS Healthcare.

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the Community Equipment Service User leaflet, which should be given out with all equipment.

How to care for your crutches

- Check the crutches are the same height
- Check tread on rubber foot (ferrule) for wear
- Check crutches for wear and tear
- Wash with hot soapy water from time to time
- Do not leave crutches outside in order to avoid weather damage
- Replacement rubber feet (ferrules) can be purchased at many high street outlets

How to use crutches

Standing up

- Position crutches near the arm of the chair/edge of bed
- You can place your arms through the forearm cuff first
- Push up from the arms of the chair or surface of bed
- Place your hands onto the crutch handles one at a time, handles pointing forward
- Make sure you feel balanced before moving off



Sitting down



- Ensure you can feel the chair with the back of your legs before sitting down
- Remove your arms from the crutches and hold in one hand or place near the chair/bed
- Place your hand(s) on the chair arms one at a time
- Bend slightly forward and sit down gently

Non weight bearing (NWB) - when you cannot put any weight through your affected leg

- Keep the affected leg off the ground by holding the knee slightly bent
- Place both crutches one pace forward, slightly apart and level
- Take your body weight through your hands and hop forward past the crutches using your non affected leg



Partial weight bearing – when you can take some weight through your affected leg

- Place both crutches one place forward, slightly apart and level
- Take some of your body weight through your hands and place your affected leg level with the crutches with some weight through it
- Step past with the unaffected leg

Stairs

Where possible, always use a hand rail when going up and down stairs.

Going upstairs



- Hold hand rail with one hand and one crutch in the other hand
- Hold second crutch horizontally together with first crutch
- If PWB, step up with unaffected leg followed by affected leg and



crutch(es)

- If NWB, hop onto step with unaffected leg followed by crutch(es) and affected leg.

Going downstairs

- Hold hand rail with one hand and one crutch in the other hand
- Hold second crutch horizontally with first crutch
- If NWB, place crutch(es) on step below keeping affected leg in front, then hop carefully down onto unaffected leg
- If PWB, place crutch on step below followed by affected leg, then step down with unaffected leg.

Posture

- Maintain an upright posture when walking or hopping
- Avoid stooping or leaning heavily to one side

Keep Safe

- Take care when walking or hopping on uneven surfaces
- Remove or avoid obstacles e.g. loose rugs
- Avoid wet floors, worn floor coverings
- Avoid outdoor hazards e.g. wet leaves and ice
- Wear supportive shoes and avoid trailing clothing
- Ensure adequate lighting

If your needs change: Please contact Adult and Childrens Helpdesk on
01452 426868 (Adults) 01452 426565 (Childrens)