

Patient Information

Therapy Department

Non-weight bearing with elbow crutches



This advice sheet is for patients who are having surgery, and who have been told they will be non-weight bearing afterwards.

This period of non-weight bearing (not putting weight through your operated leg) is necessary to provide time for proper bone and tissue healing, and also allows for any metalwork that was used during surgery to remain in the correct position. Good tissue/bone healing is improved by avoiding any undue stress.

What to expect after surgery

Pain

A patient's experience of pain varies a great deal. It is essential that you have regular and adequate painkillers so that you can begin to walk.

Let the nursing staff know how you feel as they can vary your dosage, change your painkillers, and give anti-sickness drugs.



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Exercises

The success of your operation will often depend on the amount of effort you are prepared to put into your rehabilitation.

It is essential you do the recommended exercises three times per day to prepare yourself adequately for your surgery.

Walking non-weight bearing is difficult and therefore practicing walking /standing etc. **before** the operation should mean that you will spend less time in hospital.

Sit to stand



Hold the crutches in one hand by the grips in an 'H' shape. Push up on the arm of the chair with the other hand and stand up using your un-operated leg. Slip your arms through the arm clasps.

Reverse the process to sit.

Walking



Keep your elbows into your sides. Place the crutches forwards shoulder width apart, lean on the crutches to take your weight on your arms and crutches and step through with your good leg and repeat, keeping your operated leg off the floor.

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Step up



Keep your injured leg off the floor, by bending your knee behind you. Push down on the crutches and step up with your good leg. Move your crutches onto the same step.

Step down



Keep the injured leg off the floor in front of you and place the crutches on the step below. Lower yourself down to the floor by putting your weight through the crutches.

Going upstairs



Keep your injured leg off the floor, by bending your knee behind you. Push down on the crutch and handrail and step up with your good leg. Move your crutches onto the same step.

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Going downstairs



Keep the injured leg off the floor in front of you and place the crutch on the step below. Lower yourself down to the floor by putting your weight through the rail and crutch.

Single leg stand



Stand by your kitchen counter so you can hold on if needed and stand on your un-operated leg.

Try to hold for 30 seconds, repeat 5 times.

Single leg stand with eyes closed

Repeat above exercise with eyes closed.

Single leg stand on a pillow

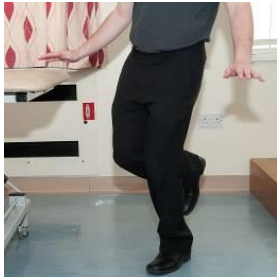


Repeat above exercise standing on a pillow. Hold for 15 seconds.

Repeat 5 times.

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Single leg squat



Stand on one leg with your foot facing forwards; bend your knee keeping your kneecap pointing forwards.

Hold onto the kitchen side if needed.

Repeat 10 times.

Discharge

Before discharge, you will practice using walking aids/any other equipment you may need at home, to increase your confidence in using them independently.

You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home. You should try to have a friend or relative stay with you initially to help support you with making meals/shopping etc. It may be helpful to stock up on easy to prepare meals prior to admission.

Further information

If you have any queries or concerns, please telephone the Orthopaedic Therapy Department between 08:00 and 17:00:

Rugby St Cross: 01788 663 054

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire: 024 7696 5106

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