



# Using (forearm) crutches

You have been prescribed crutches to take weight off one of your legs / ankles / feet. This leaflet gives advice on how best to use them.

## General advice

- Any problems or malfunctions with the crutches, please contact your doctor.
- When using crutches, make sure you are not bearing your weight on your injured side.
- Use a 'swing-to' gait: lifting the affected leg – you place both crutches in front of you, and then swing your uninjured leg to meet the crutches, taking your weight on your arms. Keep your crutches fairly close to your body.
- If you have been instructed to use 'partial weight bearing' on your injured leg, bear only the amount of weight as suggested by your doctor. Do not bear weight in an amount that causes pain on the area of injury.
- **Please return your crutches to your nearest Emergency Department, so they may be recycled and others may benefit from their use.**

## Stairs

- **When going upstairs**, first step up with the healthy leg and then follow with the crutches and injured leg up to the same step, and so forth.
- **When going downstairs**, first step with the injured leg and crutches, following down with the healthy leg to the same step.
- Alternatively, it may be safer to go up and down stairs on your bottom. Please follow advice from your advanced practitioner or doctor.

## Standing up / sitting down

- **To get up from a chair**, hold injured leg forward, grab armrest with one hand and the top of the crutches with the other hand. Using these supports, pull yourself up to a standing position.
- Reverse this procedure for **sitting**.

## Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – 'Overall, how was your experience of our service?' – by going online [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm).

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

RBFT Emergency Department. Reviewed: December 2023. Next review due: December 2025

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent