
Discharge Instructions: Using a Walker

Your health care provider has prescribed a walker for you. To use your walker, you need to learn a new way to walk. The way you walk is called your gait. Your health care provider may tell you to use a non-weight-bearing gait. This means putting no weight on the affected leg and foot. Or they may tell you to use a weight-bearing gait. This means putting weight on both legs and feet.

Guidelines for use

Here are some general tips:

- Remove small rugs, electrical cords, and anything else that may cause you to fall.
- Arrange your household to keep the items you need handy. Keep everything else out of the way.
- Use a backpack, fanny pack, apron, or pockets to carry things so you keep your hands free.

Non-weight-bearing gait

To walk with this method:

- Hold your affected (weaker) foot off the floor.
- Lift the walker and move it one step or a few inches ahead of you. If you're using a wheeled walker, roll it.
- Support your weight with your hands by gripping the top of the walker.
- Swing your good (stronger) foot forward to the center or middle of the walker.
- Repeat the process.



Weight-bearing gait

To walk with this method:

- Lift the walker and move it one step or a few inches ahead of you. If you're using a wheeled walker, roll it.

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- Support your weight with your hands by gripping the top of the walker.
 - Step forward to the center or middle of the walker with your affected (weaker) leg first. When taking a step, don't step all the way to the front of the walker.
 - Use the walker to help you keep your balance as you take the step.
 - Bring your other foot forward to the center of the walker.
 - Repeat the process.



