

Using a walking stick

Service User Information Leaflet

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Diagrams: © Physiotherapy Dept NHS Fife

Safe use of your stick/s:

- Walking sticks should be used with the handle facing backwards.
- Make sure the push buttons are secure and locked in place.
- Make sure the rubber stopper (ferrule) has sufficient grip and beware of slippery surfaces such as wet floors, wet leaves etc.
- Wear flat supportive shoes when using your walking stick
- Never exceed the weight limit of the stick. This can be found in the instruction booklet or on the stick itself.

Care and maintenance:

- Regularly check you stick for signs and symptoms of wear and tear or damage especially around the adjustment holes.
- If your rubber stopper (ferrule) is smooth, worn or split it will require replacing.
- If they get dirty wipe over with a soft cloth

Measuring and adjusting your walking stick:

- When you get your stick this should be done for you.
- If you stick has been adjusted properly you should be able to maintain an upright posture during use.
- Your elbow should be slightly bent when adjusting; this allows your body weight to be taken through the stick.
- However if it is not adjusted for you or the spring pins move by accident, follow the steps below to help you get the right length for you.

To **measure** your walking stick

- Turn the stick so the handle is resting on the floor.
- The arm should be in a relaxed position by the side of the body with the elbow slightly bent as in Fig 1.
- The stick end should just come up to your wrist joint allowing for a slight elbow bend.

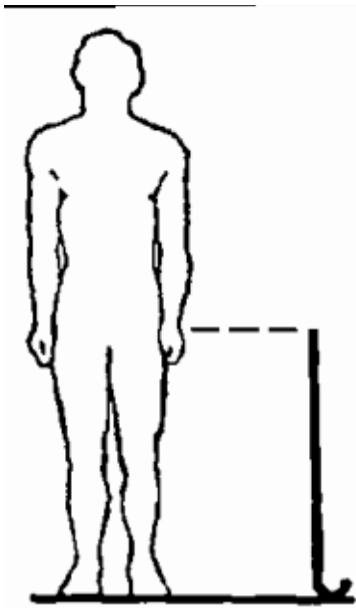


Fig 1

To **adjust** your walking stick:

- To adjust the stick up or down press the two spring pins together (Fig 2).
- Push the leg in and turning slightly.
- Adjust the leg to the required length then turn and relocate the spring pins.
- Ensure the buttons are protruding through the holes and locked in place.

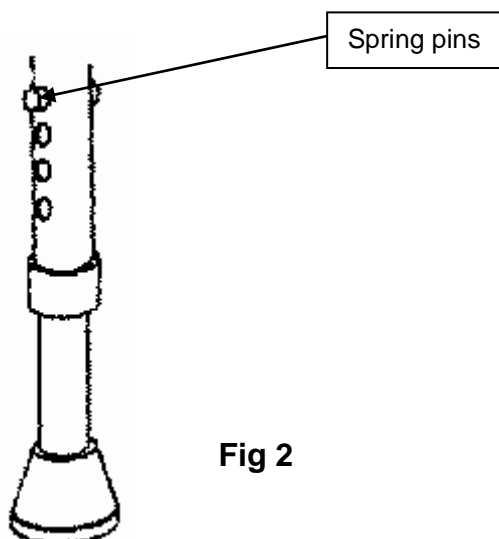


Fig 2

Using your walking stick

Getting up and sitting down from chairs

- The stick(s) should be near the arm of the chair(s) (Fig 3).
- Lean forward and with your hands on the arms of the chair, push forward and stand up.



Fig 3

- When returning to the chair, turn around and feel the chair behind the backs of your legs (Fig 4).
- The stick can be held or rested nearby while doing this.
- Place your hands gently on the chair arms, bend forward and lower gently into the chair.



Fig 4

When walking

- Place the stick on the ground at the same time as your sore or affected leg (Fig 5).
- This allows you to transfer some of the pressure from your sore or affected side to the stick.
- Step through with the good/stronger leg then repeat
- Remember that the stick should normally be held in the hand opposite to the sore or affected leg for maximum benefit.

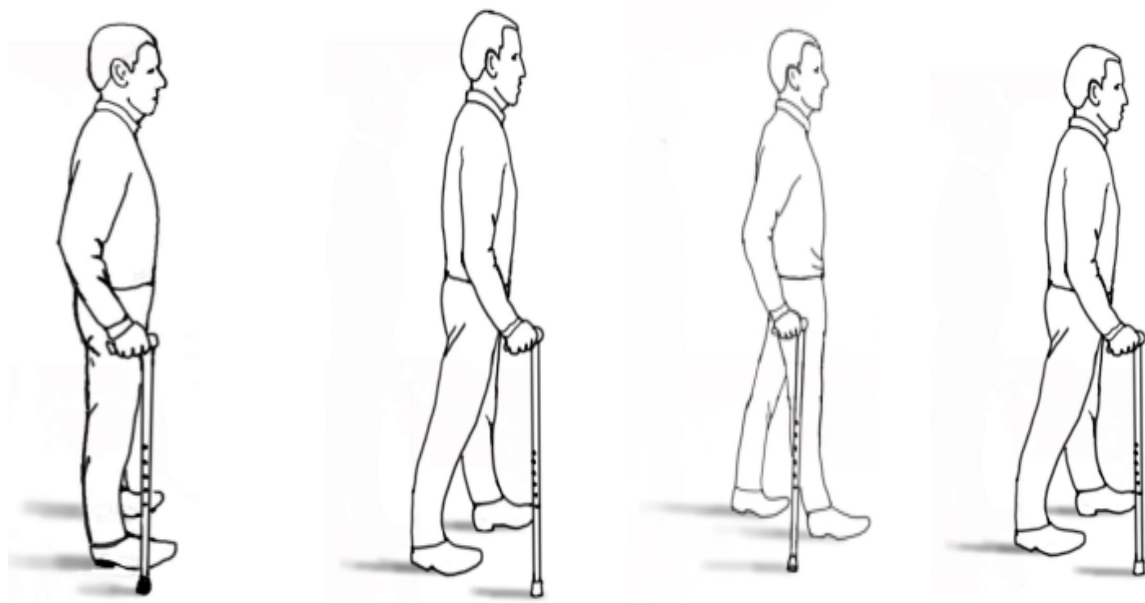


Fig 5

Walking up and down stairs

Walking up stairs

- Hold onto a handrail if at all possible (Fig 6).
- Take a step up with your good/stronger leg
- Then move your sore or affected leg onto the same step.
- Then move your stick onto the same step as your feet
- Repeat

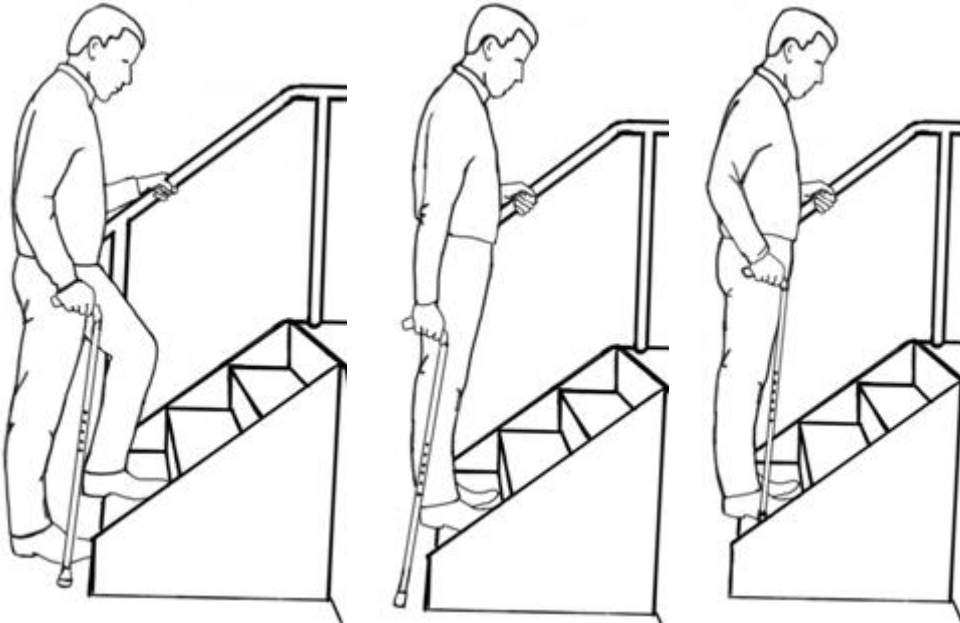


Fig 6

Walking down stairs

- Hold onto the handrail if at all possible (Fig 7)
- Place your stick down one step
- Then move your sore or affected leg onto the same step.
- Then take a step down with your good/stronger leg onto the same step
- Remember your good or unaffected leg should lead when going upstairs, and the sore or affected leg should lead when coming down.

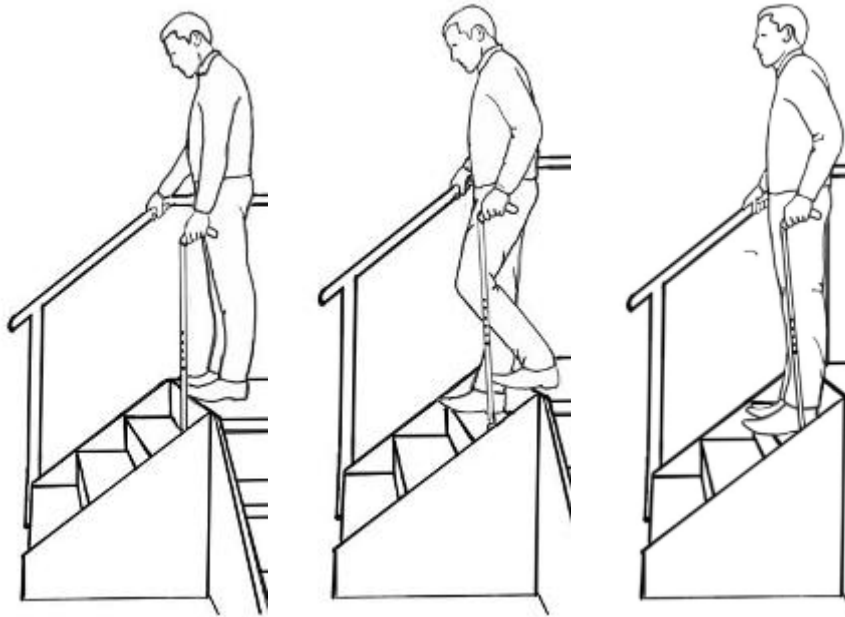


Fig 7

Walking up stairs with no handrail

- Stand with the stick/s close to the stair edge (Fig 8).
- First take a step up with your good/stronger leg.
- Then take a step up with your sore or affected leg on the same step.
- Then bring your stick/s up onto the step.
- Always go one step at a time.

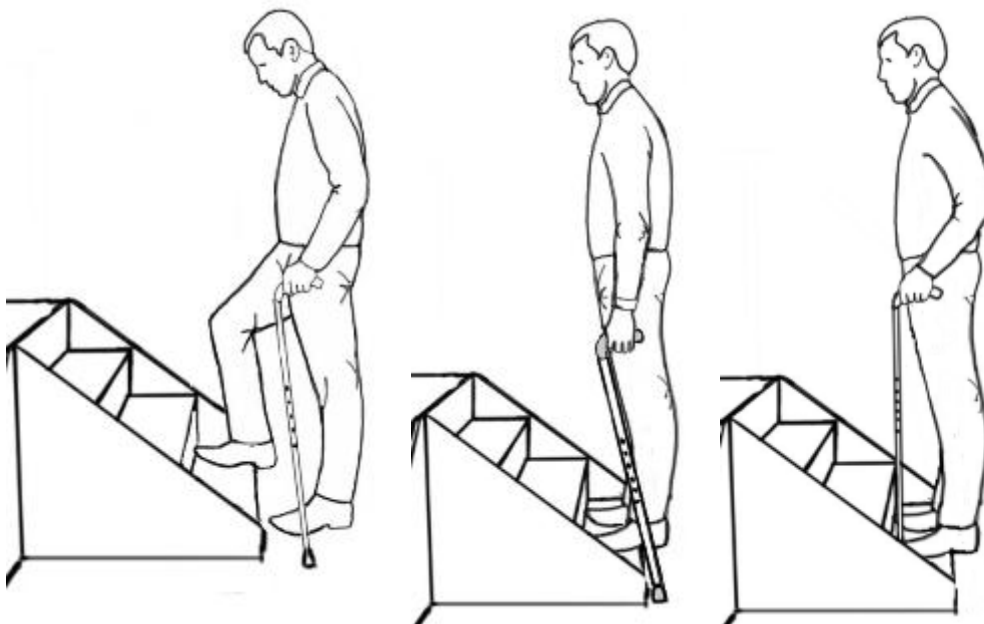


Fig 8

Walking down stairs with no handrail

- Stand with the stick/s close to the stair edge (Fig 9).
- First put your stick/s one step down.
- Then take a step down with your sore or affected leg.
- Then take a step down with your good/stronger leg, onto the same step as your sore or affected leg.
- Always go one step at a time.

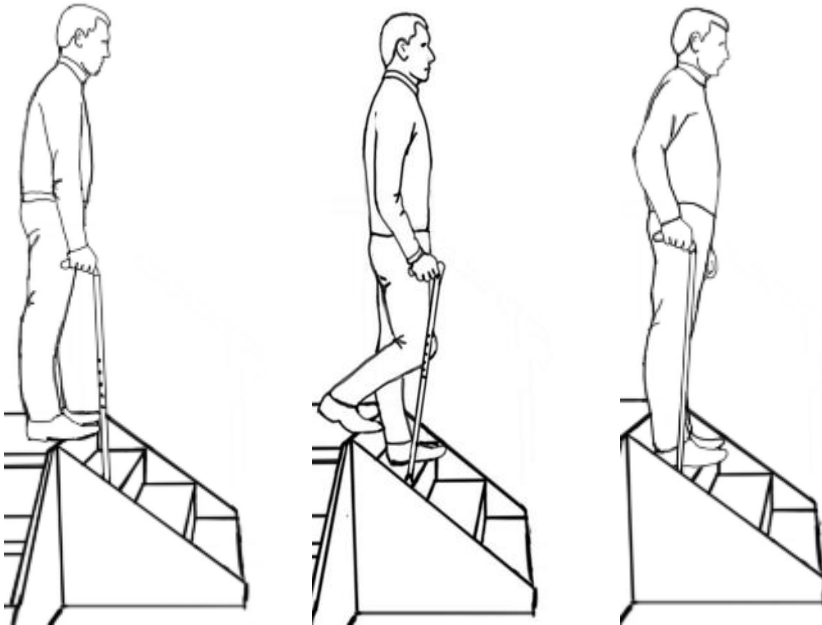


Fig 9

For Further Advice: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/tests-and-treatments/medicines-and-medical-aids/walking-aids/using-a-walking-stick>