USING A WALKER

WALKING WITH A WALKER

1. Lift the walker and place it at a comfortable distance in front of you with all four of its legs on the floor. This distance is usually equal to an arms' length.

2. Move your operative leg toward the walker first. Then take a step with your good leg, bringing it slightly ahead of the operative leg. If you have had surgery on both sides, it does not matter which leg you use to begin walking.

3. Do not take big steps that place you too close to the walker. There should be space between you and the walker at all times. If you are too close, you may lose your balance.

4. Hold your head up and look straight ahead. It is tempting to watch your feet, but more tiring, and you may run into something.

5. Be sure to walk slowly.

*If you have any questions about these guidelines – or the appropriateness of any other activities – please call Orthopaedic Specialists of North Carolina at (919) 497-0445.
SITTING WITH A WALKER

1. **Slowly** back up to the chair, bed or toilet until you feel it against the back of your legs.

2. Let go of the walker and reach back for the bed, chair arms or toilet seat, while sliding your operative leg forward.

3. **Slowly** lower yourself onto the seat by leaning forward and keeping your operative leg outstretched in front of you. Go slowly so that you do not “plop” into the chair.

4. If you have had both joints replaced, place both hands on the chair arms, bed or commode seat as noted above. Lower yourself to the seat and gradually walk both legs forward. Again, do not “plop” down.

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GOING UP STAIRS WITH A WALKER

Always remember, when climbing stairs, start with your good leg going up, and start with your operative leg going down. **(Up with the good, down with the bad!)** When going up and down stairs with a walker, you also should have a sturdy handrail.

1. Approach the stairs and place your feet about six inches from the first step.

2. Fold the walker and place it in one hand. Place your other hand on the rail.

3. Lift the folded walker and set it to the back of the step.

4. Step up first with your good leg, and then bring up your operative leg.

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5. At the top of the stairs, unfold walker and set it on the landing. Make sure you hear the walker click into locked position. Place both hands on the walker.

6. Step up first with your good leg, and then bring up your operative leg.

GOING DOWN STAIRS WITH A WALKER

1. Approach the stairs and place your walker about two inches from the top step.

2. Fold the walker and place it in one hand. Place your other hand on the rail.

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3. Set the folded walker down and to the front edge of the first step.

4. Step down first with your operative leg, and then bring down your good leg.

5. At the bottom of the stairs, unfold the walker and set it on the landing. Make sure you hear the walker click into locked position.

6. Place both hands on the walker. Step down first with your operative leg and then with your good leg.

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GOING UP A CURB WITH A WALKER: FORWARD METHOD

- Walk straight up to the curb.
- Put all four legs of the walker up on the curb.
- Push straight down on the walker when stepping up with the good leg.
- Step up with the operative leg.

GOING UP A CURB WITH A WALKER: BACKWARD METHOD

- Walk up to the curb and turn so your back is to the curb.
- Step up on the curb with your good leg.
- Step up on the curb with your operative leg.
- Lift the walker and put all four legs up on the curb.
- Turn back around carefully.

GOING DOWN A CURB WITH A WALKER

- Walk up to the edge of the curb.
- Put all four legs of the walker on the ground below.
- Step down with your operative leg, then your good leg.

Never go down a curb backwards

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NON-WEIGHT BEARING
For this method, you are not to put weight on your injured leg. When using the walker, you hold your injured leg up off the floor.

- Move your walker out in front of you. Be sure all 4 legs of your walker are flat on the floor.
- Pushing down on your walker with your arms, hop on your good foot to the center of your walker.

TOUCH DOWN WEIGHT BEARING
For this method, you only touch the ball of your injured foot to the floor. Think of it like walking on eggshells.

- Move your walker out in front of you about and arm length. Be sure all legs of the walker are flat on the floor.
- Move your injured foot forward into the walker, only touching the ball of your foot on the floor.
- Use your arms pushing down on the walker to help take weight off your injured leg. Step your good leg forward into the center of the walker.

PARTIAL WEIGHT BEARING
Use this method when your doctor lets you put 30-50% of your body weight on your injured leg.

- Move your walker out in front of you. Be sure all 4 legs of your walker are flat on the floor.
- Step your injured foot into the walker.
- Using your arms to push on the walker to keep some weight off your foot, step your good leg forward into the center of the walker.

WEIGHT BEARING AS TOLERATED
You can put as much weight on your injured leg as you can when using the walker. The walker helps give you some support and balance.

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