

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Therapy Services

Using elbow crutches

If you are viewing this leaflet online, please click on all video links to watch information videos. If you have a paper copy, please copy the link into your browser.

1. To go up stairs (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GhzY3AvNVU>):

- Hold the handrail with one hand and the crutch in the other hand, with the 2nd crutch held on the outside handle using your fingers to grip.
- Step up first with your good leg.
- Step up with your affected leg.
- Bring the crutch up onto the same step you are standing on.
- Do only one step at a time.

To go downstairs:

- First place your crutch on the next step down.
- Step down with your affected leg.
- Step down with your good leg onto the same step.
- Do only one step at a time.

2. How to stand up from a chair using elbow crutches

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZI41bkTb_Y):

- Place both crutches in front of you to make a letter H shape.
- Hold the chair arm with one hand and the crutches with your other hand.
- Push up from the chair using your strongest leg.
- Only once you are stood you can put your arms in the crutches.

Note: Attempting to stand up with your arms placed in the elbow crutches may result in an injury to the shoulder or arm.

Sitting down using elbow crutches:

- Step backwards to the chair until you feel the back of your legs touch the chair.
- Take both arms out of the elbow crutches.
- Hold the chair arm with one hand and the crutches with your other hand.
- Gently lower yourself down.

Note: Attempting to sit down with your arms still placed in the elbow crutches may result in an injury to the shoulder or arm.

3. How to go up and down a step using elbow crutches

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFzgofiuACk>)

To step up:

- Walk close up to the step.
- Step up with your good leg.
- Step up with your affected leg.
- Bring the crutches up onto the step.

To step down:

- Place your crutches down the step and in front of you.
- Step down first with your affected leg.
- Step down with your good leg.

4. How to go up and down a step (non weight bearing) using elbow crutches

To step up:

- Approach close to the step.
- Use your crutches for support as you use your good leg to hop up onto the step.
- Bring your crutches up onto the step.

To step down:

- Place your crutches down the step and in front of you.
- Use your crutches for support as you use your good leg to hop down.

5. How to use elbow crutches – full weight bearing

- Place both crutches out in front of you and slightly out to the side.
- Step with your affected leg first – make sure you don't step past the crutches.
- Step with your good leg, bringing it level with your affected leg.

6. How to use elbow crutches – partial weight bearing

- Place both crutches out in front of you and slightly out to the side.
- Take a small step with your affected leg first – make sure you don't step past the crutches.
- Only put the equivalent to approximately 20-30% of your body weight through your affected leg.
- Step with your good leg, bringing it level with your affected leg – you should still be slightly behind the crutches at this point. This enables you to maintain a good base of support for balance.

7. How to use elbow crutches – touch weight bearing

A good way of making sure you are **TOUCH WEIGHT BEARING** is to imagine that you are stepping with your affected leg onto an eggshell, putting only a small amount of pressure through your leg so as not to break the shell:

- Place both crutches out in front of you and slightly out to the side.
- Take a small step with your affected leg first – make sure you don't step past the crutches and taking weight through your arms.
- Step with your good leg, bringing it level with your affected leg – you should still be slightly behind the crutches at this point. This enables you to maintain a good base of support for balance.