

General Guidelines For Using a Cane



How can using a cane help me?

If you have weakness on one side of your body, a cane may help you stay safer when you walk. Using a cane improves balance by increasing your body's base of support. A cane lessens pressure in your knees, hip, feet and ankles.

Is my cane the right fit for me?

Here's an easy way to tell.

- Stand up straight. Your elbows should have a slight bend.
- Wear the shoes you will be walking with most often.
- The top of the cane or curve of the cane should be even with the crease of your wrist.

What's the best way to use my cane?

Hold the cane in the hand of your stronger/unaffected side. Elbow should bend just a little. When you walk, the cane and weaker/affected side should move together. When the tip of the cane is on the ground, the affected leg should be on the ground also.

This allows the weight of the body to be absorbed by the cane, not the weaker/affected side

To Walk

Place the cane about 2 inches in front or to the side of the stronger leg. When you are ready to take a step, move the weaker/affected leg, and move the cane forward at the same time. Then finish the step with the stronger leg.

Climbing Stairs

Going up stairs: Hold the cane in the hand of your stronger/unaffected side. Have a firm grasp of the handrail with the other hand (the weaker/affected side).

Step up with stronger leg, followed by weaker leg and cane moving together.

Going down stairs: Hold the cane in the hand of your stronger/unaffected side. Have a firm grasp of the handrail with the other hand (the weaker/affected side). Place the cane on the lower step, followed by the cane and then the stronger leg.

Talk with your doctor, physical therapist or nurse if you have any questions or concerns about using your cane.



