



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Managing the stairs (non-weight bearing)

Physiotherapy department

Patient information

## Going upstairs

- Hold your walking stick or elbow crutch in one hand, use the handrail with the other hand to stabilise yourself.
- Lean on handrail and your stick or your crutch and bend your affected leg to reduce the risk of your foot hitting the step.
- Hop up on to the next step with your unaffected leg.
- Then bring your walking stick or your elbow crutch up to the step your foot is on.
- Repeat this exercise until you are at the top of the stairs.



## Going downstairs

- Hold the stick or the crutch in one hand, use the handrail with the other hand to stabilise yourself, close to the lip of the top step.
- With one hand on the handrail, place your stick or your crutch down onto the next step.
- Straighten your affected leg (keeping it off the floor) in front of you.
- Hop or lower your unaffected or your non-operated leg down onto the same step as the stick/ crutch.
- Repeat this sequence until you finish the stairs.



# Going upstairs if you do not have a handrail or banister available

You will likely be offered the opportunity to practice this with the physiotherapy team before you leave the hospital.

If you do not have a handrail or banister available, please follow the instructions below.

- Keep both your walking sticks or your elbow crutches on the ground floor.
- Putting your weight through the walking sticks or crutches and bend your affected leg to reduce the risk of your foot hitting the step.
- Hop up on to the next step with your unaffected leg.
- Repeat this sequence until you are at the top of the stairs.
- Bring yourself close to the lip of the top step.



# Going downstairs if you do not have a handrail or banister available

- Bring your walking stick or your elbow crutch up to the step your foot is on.
- Place both your walking sticks or your elbow crutches on the step below.
- Straighten your affected leg (keeping it off the floor) in front of you.
- Putting your weight through the walking sticks or crutches, hop or lower yourself to the step where your walking aids are.
- Repeat this sequence until you finish the stairs.



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