

Using a Cane

Why should I use a cane?

Walking with a cane can help:

- ✓ Reduce the stress on your joint
- ✓ Reduce pain
- ✓ Increase your safety while walking
- ✓ Improve how you walk
- ✓ Improve your balance
- ✓ Reduce your chances of falling

Which hand should I hold the cane in?

When you have a sore leg or weak leg, hold your cane in the hand opposite to the leg that has the problem.

When you are using the cane to help your balance and prevent falls, use the cane in hand that works best for you.

Your healthcare provider can help you with this decision.

What is the correct height for a cane?

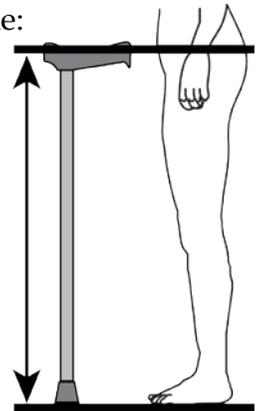
The cane must be the right height for you.

The cane is at the right height when:

- ✓ The handle is at the level of your wrist.
- ✓ Your elbow has a slight bend to it when you hold the cane handle.

To check the height of the cane:

1. Stand up straight.
2. Let your arm hang by your side with your shoulder relaxed.
3. Check that the top of the cane handle is at the level of your wrist.



You might need to adjust the height of your cane depending on what you have on your feet.

If you are not sure how to adjust your cane, ask your healthcare provider for help.

Safety Tips

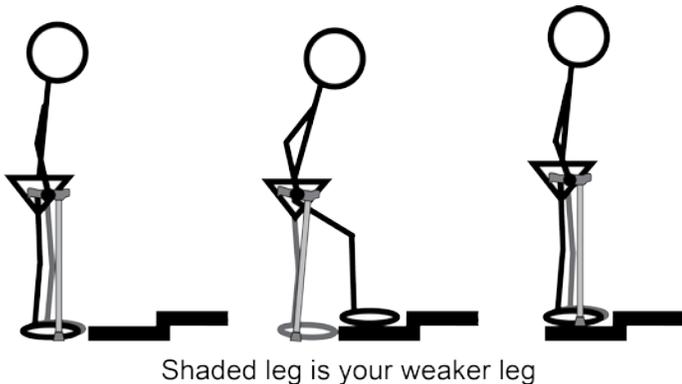
- Choose a cane with a comfortable handgrip and a secure non-slip tip to grip the ground.
- Wear shoes that give you good support and have non-slip soles.
- Stand up and get your balance first before starting to walk.
- Stand up straight, look ahead and not at your feet.
- Remove loose rugs and clutter from the floor.
- Remove or secure tripping hazards such as telephone or electrical cords.
- To prevent slipping on wet surfaces, check the rubber tip on your cane each week to make sure it is not worn. Replace it when necessary.

Walking up and down stairs

Your strong leg does the work of lifting and lowering your body when taking stairs.

Always face the stairs squarely. If there is a handrail, hold the rail with one hand and your cane in the other hand.

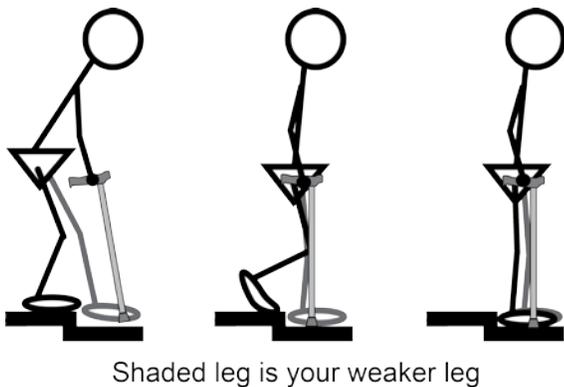
1. Going up stairs



Step up with your strong leg.

Follow with your weak leg and cane.

2. Going down stairs



Step down with your weak leg and cane.

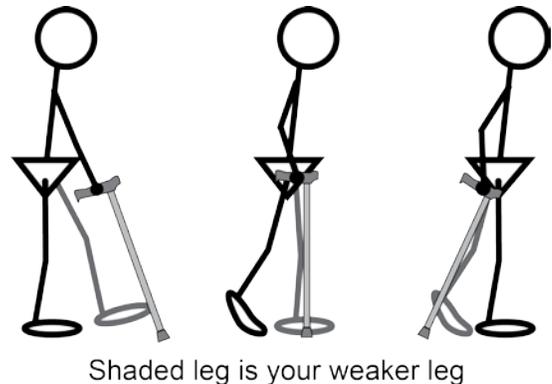
Follow with your strong leg.

Walking on level ground

Stand up straight.

As you step forward with your weak leg, place the cane the same distance in front of you. The tip of the cane should be even with or slightly ahead of the foot of your weak leg.

Step forward, past the cane, with your strong leg.



Do I need to use the cane all the time?

Everyone is different. Some people find they need to use the cane all the time to get around safely. Other people find they only need to use the cane for long walks, or when walking on rough ground.

It's good to ask

Not sure if a cane is the right choice for you?

Not sure what type of cane is best?

Ask your healthcare provider.