



Cane Use

Adjustment of cane

While standing straight and your arms hanging by your sides, the hand grip of the cane should be at the level of the bend in your wrist. You should have approximately 20 degrees of bend in your elbow when you are using the cane.

Instructions for cane use

- Hold the cane in the hand on the side opposite the injured leg.
- As you step forward with the injured leg, move the cane forward with it at the same time, bearing weight through the cane when you step on the injured leg.
- Advance the uninjured leg forward while you are applying weight through the cane.
- As you continue to walk, the cane should advance with the injured leg at the same time.

The natural tendency is to use the cane on the same side as the injured leg. However, this tends to cause one to sway from side to side while walking, which could cause new problems elsewhere, such as in the hips or back. Thus, it is normally advised to use the cane on the side opposite of the injured leg.

Precautions

- If the cane tip gets wet outside, make sure you dry it off before walking inside on a slick surface. This will help prevent the cane from slipping out from under you.
- Also, be careful of placing the cane on a small rug which can slide out from under you.
- If the cane is not new, check the rubber tip for cracks or excessive wear. A new one can generally be purchased at a drugstore, discount store, or medical supply company.

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu>