Using Walker on Stairs and Curbs with Leg Amputation

Your therapist will show you how to use a walker before you have a prosthesis. These instructions are the same for above or below knee amputation.

**Going up and down stairs with a folding walker**

- Start with your unaffected leg going up stairs and start with your residual limb going down. Remember: “up with the good, down with the bad”.
- When going up or down stairs with a walker, use a handrail for safety and balance.

This method will only work on steps that are 4 inches high.

**Going Up Stairs**

- Fold your walker and place it out to your side.
- Push down on it for support and hold onto the handrail with the other hand.
- Step up with your unaffected leg. Bring the walker up to the same step.
- Repeat going up each step, starting with the walker then your unaffected leg.
- At the top of the stairs, unfold the walker and set it on the landing. Make sure that you hear the walker click into the locked position.

**Going Down Stairs**

- Walk up to the stairs and place your walker about 2 inches from the top step.
- Fold your walker and place it on the step below where you are walking.
- Hold onto the walker with one hand and hold onto the handrail with the other for balance and support.
- Step down with your unaffected leg.
- Repeat going down each step, starting with the walker, and then your unaffected leg.
Going up a curb

**Forward Method**
- Walk straight up to the curb and place all four legs of the walker up on the curb.
- Push straight down on the walker and step up with your unaffected leg.

**Backward Method**
- Walk up to the curb and turn so your back is to the curb.
- Step up on the curb with your unaffected leg.
- Lift the walker and put all four legs of the walker up on the curb.
- Turn back around carefully.

Going Down a Curb

- Walk up to the edge of the curb.
- Put all four legs of the walker on the ground below.
- Supporting your weight on the walker, step down with unaffected leg.

Never go down a curb backwards.

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Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care. For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.