Stairs and Curbs Using a Walker

Your therapist will show you how to use a walker. When climbing stairs start with your strong leg going up, and start with your weak leg 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.

**Going Up Stairs**

- Turn the walker sideways so the front of the walker is beside your leg.
- Put your hand on the handle of the walker closest to the stairs. Put your other hand on the stair railing.
- Put the first two legs of the walker on the first step.
- Move your strong leg onto the first step.
- Lift your injured leg to the same step.
- Repeat going up each step starting with the walker, strong leg, then weak leg.
**Going Down Stairs**

- Turn the walker sideways so the front of the walker is beside your leg.
- Put your hand on the handle of the walker furthest from the stairs. Put your other hand on the stair railing.
- Put the first two legs of the walker on the first step.
- Move your injured foot onto the first step.
- Lower your good foot down to the same step.
- Repeat going down each step starting with the walker, weak leg, then strong leg.

**Going Up and Down Stairs with a Folding Walker**

**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 strong leg.
- Bring your weak leg and the walker up to the same step.
- Repeat going up each step, starting with the walker, strong leg and then weak leg.
- At the top of the stairs, unfold the walker and set it on the landing. Make sure 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 it with one hand and hold onto the handrail with the other.
- Step down with your weak leg and then bring down your strong leg.
- Repeat going down each step starting with the walker, weak leg and then strong leg.
- At the bottom of the stairs, unfold the walker and set it on the landing. Make sure you hear the walker click into the locked position.

**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 when stepping up with the strong leg. Then, step with the weak leg.

**Backward Method**
- Walk up to the curb and turn so your back is to the curb.
- Step up on the curb with your strong foot, then your weak foot.
- Lift the walker and put all four legs 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.
- Step down with your weak foot, then your strong foot.

Never go down a curb backwards.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.