

# HELPING SOMEONE TO WALK

*One person assistance*

*With a single stick*

*With a frame*





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## SAFETY TIPS

### Safety Tips

- Clear pathways and walkways of any obstructions that may restrict walking (remove telephone cords, loose mats, electrical cords, garden hoses, bushes, etc).
- Take up any clothes that fall below the person's ankles, e.g. a dressing gown.
- Good lighting in houses and pathways is important.
- Never try to stop a fall—you could injure yourself attempting to prevent it rather than helping the person.
- Make sure that you check the stoppers on the bottom of walking sticks regularly. If they are worn replace immediately. A worn stopper can slip and cause a fall.
- Check the state of the flooring and regularly repair or replace cracked or lifting tiles or linoleum. Be aware of the need for the person to lift their toes higher when walking on thick carpet. Frayed and upturned mats and carpet edges are a hazard.
- Have an Occupational Therapist or HomeFront Assessor look at the general mobility around the house.
- The height of the walking aid must be correctly adjusted specifically for the person's use. Consult your health provider on fitting of walking aids.

ONE PERSON ASSISTANCE



If the person requires assistance to walk, you may use the 'thumb and forearm' grasp to assist them. Depending on the person's ability, you may need to ask your health provider how best to walk with the person.

Stand on the person's stronger side and get them to push their hand and elbow down into your hands to provide support as they walk.

If falling is a risk then do not embark on a walk without the appropriate level of aid. Have your health provider review the client's mobility, check walking aids and instruct on the safest way to assist (i.e. is a wheelchair appropriate at times?).

WITH A SINGLE STICK OR FOUR PRONGED WALKING STICK



The stick is held in the hand of the person's strongest side. For example, if the right leg is weak or painful, they should hold the stick in their left hand.

If supervision or additional support is needed, you can stand by the person's other side.

Check with your health provider for advice about what will best suit the person.

WITH A FRAME OR A WHEELED WALKER



If the person has one side weaker than the other, stand on the weaker side.

Have one hand at the back of the person, holding onto either their trousers, waist or use a transfer sling (or transfer strap).

Use the other hand to steady the frame and assist with lifting it, if necessary.



If the person requires only minimal assistance, you can stand at their back, holding their hips to steady them if required, or use a transfer sling (or transfer strap).