

## Walkers

A walker transfers some of the normal functions of the legs and feet to the arms and hands thereby helping a compromised individual remain mobile. The most important of these functions are weight bearing, balance, and stability. Our representative will adjust the walker properly for your height.

### Height Adjustment

If someone picked up the walker for you, adjust the height in the following way:

- Stand (have someone aid you if necessary) with your shoulders squared and your arms hanging naturally while looking straight ahead.
- A friend or family member should adjust the height of all four walker legs such that the height of the hand grips are slightly above your wrists. **DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS BY YOURSELF.**
- Make sure all legs are locked securely in the selected position.

### Using the Walker

Your doctor has prescribed a walker for you. To use your walker, you need to learn a new gait, or way to walk. Your doctor will tell you to use either a non-weight-bearing gait (which means putting no weight on one leg and foot) or a weight-bearing gait (putting weight on both legs and feet).

#### Non-Weight-Bearing Method

- Hold your injured (weaker) foot off the floor.
- Lift the walker (roll it if you're using a wheeled walker).
- Move the walker forward about 12 inches.
- Support your weight on your hands.
- Swing your good (stronger) foot forward to the center of the walker.

#### Weight-Bearing Method

- Roll the walker (lift it if you're using a walker without wheels).
- Move the walker forward about 12 inches.
- Step forward with your injured leg, new joint, or weaker side first.
- Use the walker to help you keep your balance as you take the step.
- Bring your other foot forward to the center of the walker.



## Safety

- Remove throw rugs, electrical cords, and anything else that may cause you to fall.
- Arrange your household to keep the items you need handy. Keep everything else out of the way.
- Use a backpack, fanny pack, apron, or pockets to carry things so you keep your hands free.

## Cleaning

Use a non-abrasive detergent or cleaner with warm water. Periodically check knobs and screws to ensure they are tight.

## Four-Wheel Walker

A four wheeled walker is a lightweight frame that is used to provide walking support, with the added advantages of swivel front wheels and a temporary seat.

### Height Adjustment

- Stand with your shoulders relaxed and your arms hanging loosely at your sides.
- The handlebar height should be at the crease of your wrist when your arms are relaxed at your sides
- Loosen the knobs on the outside of the handlebars. For some models this may be sufficient to allow you to raise and lower the handlebars. If so, move the handlebars to the desired height. Tighten the knobs.
- If the walker has bolts which go through the handlebars, remove them and then move the handlebars to the desired height. Re-install the bolts and screw the knobs to the bolt. The knobs should be on the outside of the handlebars. Some frames have a hexagonal hole for the bolt head to fit into. Ensure the bolt head is properly aligned with hole before tightening fully.
- The seat height is not adjustable. If the seat is too high or too low, a different size of walker may be more appropriate. You should be able to sit on the seat with the balls of your feet touching the ground.

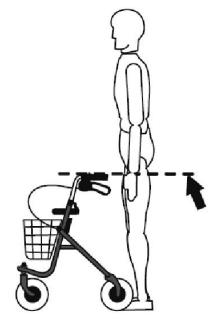
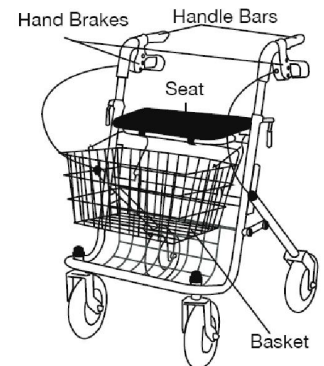


Figure 1:  
Correct sizing

### Using the Four Wheel Walker

- Lean on the walker, allowing it to roll forward with control as you step forward.
- To slow the walker down, squeeze or pull up on the handbrake
- Before using the seat, activate the parking brake by pushing down on the handbrake.
- To release the brake, carefully squeeze the brake handles again, being careful not to pinch your fingers.

### Folding & Unfolding the Walker

- To unfold the walker, push down on the seat to open it fully.
- To fold the walker, lift up on the handle attached to the seat. The walker may have a tab under the seat which locks the walker in the open position. Lift up on the tab to release the seat so it will fold. Ensure all body parts are clear of the frame before folding the walker.

### Sitting on the Walker

- To sit on the walker, turn around and back up until you feel the seat touch the back of your legs
- Always lock the brakes of the walker before sitting or standing up.
- Reach back and place your arms on the handles of the walker.

## Sitting on the Walker (continued)

- Sit down slowly and carefully.
- The walker is not intended to be used as a wheelchair. Do not move the walker when sitting in it.
- If the walker has a basket, be sure it is securely hooked on to the cross rail before putting anything in it.

## Cleaning

Use a non-abrasive detergent or cleaner with warm water. Periodically check knobs and screws to ensure they are tight.

## Warnings

- Do not use the walker on stairs or escalators.
- Pay special attention on ramps or slopes.
- Do not overload the basket.
- An oxygen tank or other awkward load should be fastened down.
- Some walkers come with a flexible back strap. Do not push down or lean on this strap with your hand. Do not use the back strap to lift or carry the walker.