CRUTCHES

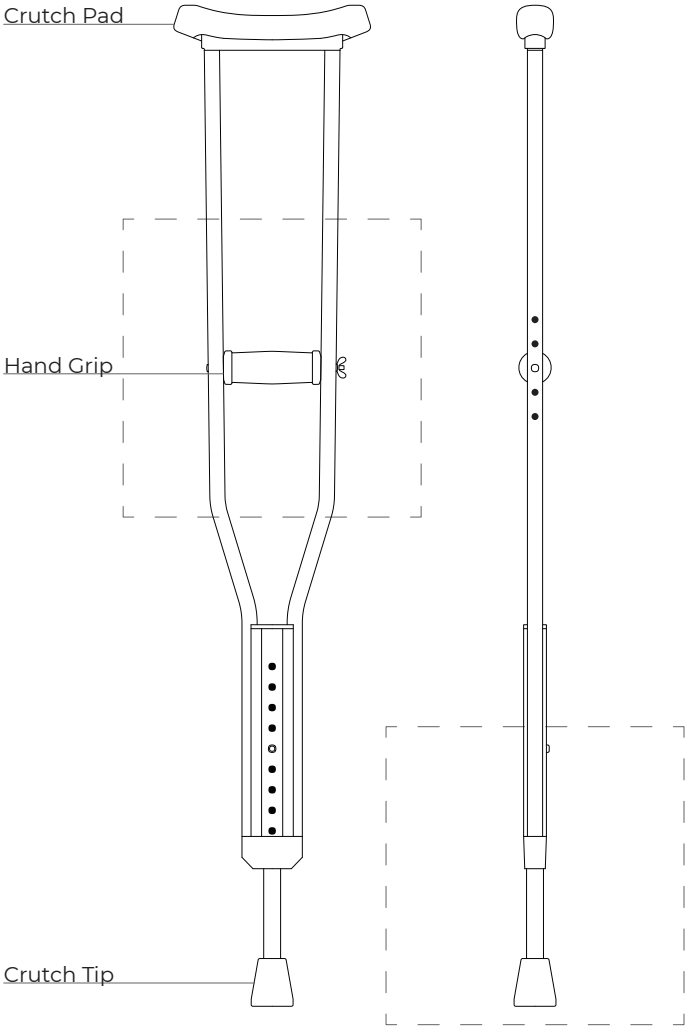
Zivot Limb Preservation Centre

How To Use Crutches Like a Pro

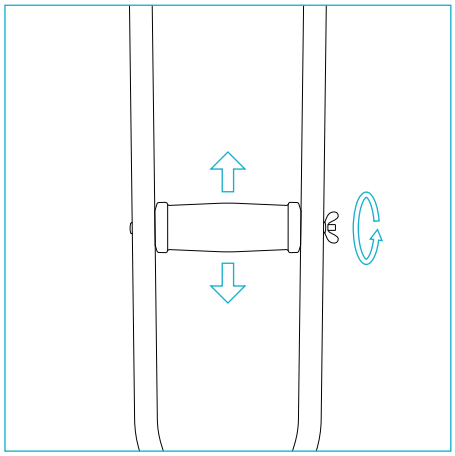
In order for the wound to heal on your foot you may be required to use crutches to keep pressure off the foot. It takes some coordination to get around on crutches. To make sure you use your crutches correctly, please read these instructions and follow them carefully.

STEP 1: Getting to Know Your Crutches

Anatomy of the Crutch



1.



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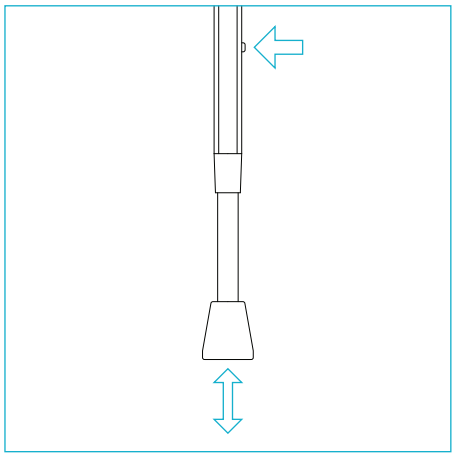


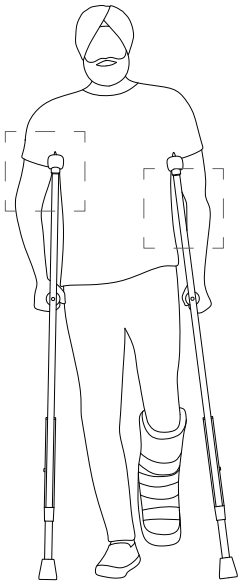
Crutches are adjustable and can be adjusted in two ways:

1. The hand grip can be moved up or down to decrease or increase the distance between the hand grip and the top of the crutch (crutch pad). To adjust the hand grip unscrew the wing nut to release the bolt, adjust the position of the crutch grip, replace the bolt and tighten the wing nut.

2. The total length of the crutch can also be adjusted. This is done by depressing the spring button and sliding the crutch tip up or down until the spring button locks into the desired position.

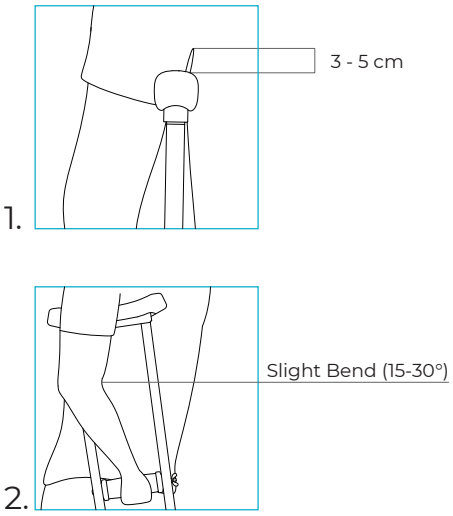
STEP 2: Getting Set Up

Before using your crutches it is important to adjust them to your body.



1. The crutch pads which sit at the top of the crutches should reach a height of 3 - 5 cm below your armpit. Adjusting the total height of the crutches will bring the crutch pads to the appropriate height. The total crutch length should reach from just below the armpit to approximately 15 cm infront of the foot.

2. Hand grips should be positioned to allow for a slight bend in the arm (15 - 30°) when the user is stationary.

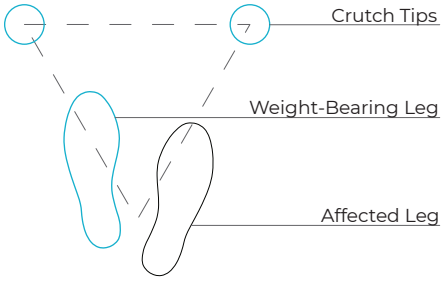


STEP 3: Get Moving

Your foot and ankle surgeon has told you to avoid all weight-bearing on the affected foot/leg. Follow the instructions below to move safely and efficiently on your crutches while keeping the affected foot/leg off the ground.

Tripod Position:

The tripod position is the position in which you stand when using crutches. To get into the tripod position, place the crutch tips about 10 -15 cm to the side and front of each foot, then stand on your 'good' foot (weight-bearing foot).



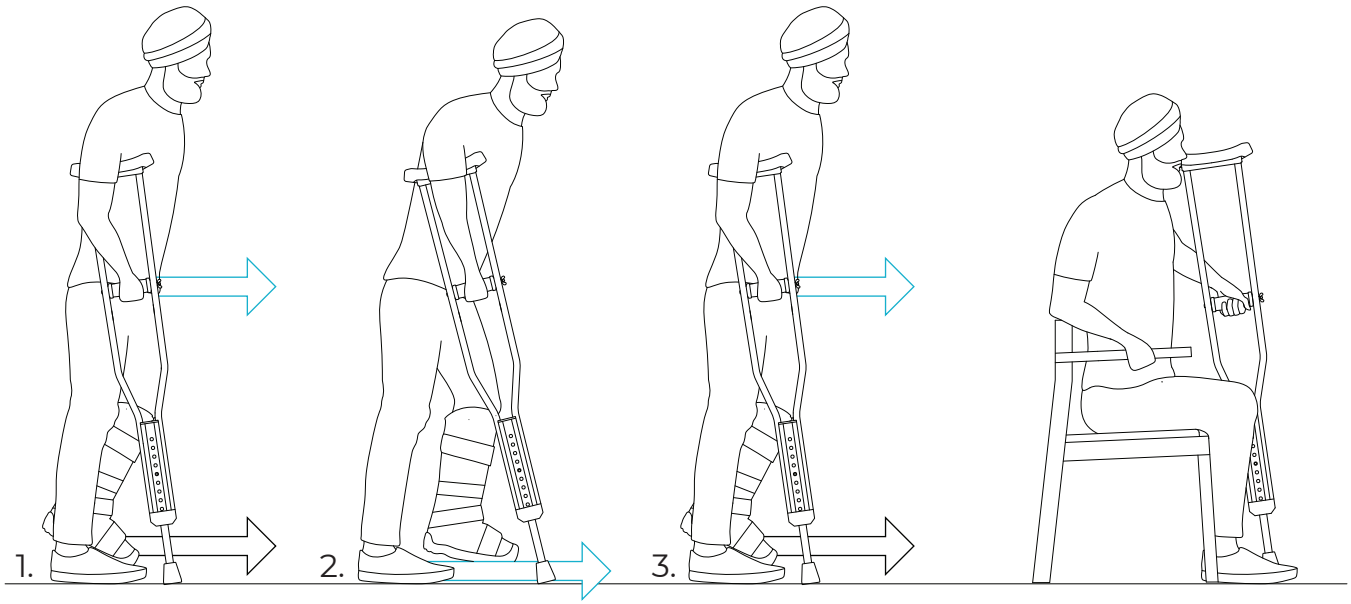
Tripod Position

Walking:

1. Begin in the tripod position keeping all your weight on your 'good' foot. Advance your crutches along with the affected leg.

2. Transfer your weight to the crutches and advance your 'good' foot.

3. Repeat.

Sitting:

It is preferable to use chairs with arm rests and a back while using crutches. Before lowering or raising yourself from a chair the back of your legs should touch the front of the chair, hold both crutches in one hand while the other grasps the arm rest.