Crutches

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Scenario:

Ms. Bartosz, a 20 year old woman, tore her right ACL while playing soccer and came in yesterday for the ACL surgery. She stated that this was her first surgery and has never needed assistance with walking. Today she is going home, but needs training on how to use crutches before she is discharged.

Clients Questions

1. How do I properly use crutches?

2. How do I stand up with crutches?

3. Since I have stairs at home, how do I use my crutches to walk up and down stairs?

Nurse's response

1. “After we fit the crutches to your correct height (hand-grips should be even with the top of your hip), you would be moving both crutches crutches at the same time, bearing all weight on your left leg. This motion is known the three-point gait.”

2. “When standing up from a bed or chair, you will move to the edge of the seat, holding your crutches on the affected side, with your free hand, you will push up from the chair and then placing your weight on the good leg.”

Nurse's response cont…

3. “ When going up the stairs, hold both crutches under the arm away from the rail and with the other hand hold onto the rail. Also start with the good leg, followed by your injured leg and the crutches at the same time. When going down the stairs, hold both crutches under the arm away from the rail and with the other hand hold onto the rail. Walk down with the injured leg (make sure you ask the doctor how much weight you can put onto this leg), it will be followed by the crutches, and then followed by the the good leg.”

Equipment needed

Crutches

Client teach back

Ms. Bartosz states…

1. I will always put my weight on my good leg and rarely on my bad leg.

2. Whenever using my crutches, I will always lead with my good leg and it is recommended for me to alternate with my crutches.

3. I should always have both of my crutches in reach and should not walk without them until my doctor gives me the okay to do so.

References:

Curti, B. (2018). Using Crutches. UHN Patient Education.
https://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health_Information/Health_Topics/Documents/Using_Crutches.pdf

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