

Choosing and Using a Cane

How to Get a Proper Fit for Your Cane

The correct length of a cane is measured from the wrist to the floor. To measure for a cane:

- Wear your normal shoes.
- Hold your arm with a 20° to 30° bend in the elbow. (If your upper arm is at 12 o'clock, your hand points to 5 o'clock.)
- Ask someone else to measure the distance from your wrist to the floor. This measurement should be about equal to the distance from the point where your leg bone fits into the hip socket to the floor.
- If necessary, adjust the cane to match your measurement.

Wood canes can be cut with a small saw. Remove the rubber tip, measure the cane from the top edge of the handle to the desired length, cut the cane, and replace the rubber tip.

Aluminum canes are adjusted by pushing the button in and sliding the tube to the new length until the button locks in place.

Using Your Cane Safely

Unless instructed otherwise, use the cane on the **opposite side** of your injury or weakness. For safe use of your cane:

1. Put all of your weight on your unaffected leg, and then move the cane and your affected leg a comfortable distance forward.
2. With your weight supported on both your cane and your affected leg, step through with your unaffected leg.
3. Place your cane firmly on the ground before you take a step. Do not place your cane too far ahead of you, or it could slip from under you.

***Using Your Cane
Safely,
continued***

Non-skid rubber tips help keep you from slipping. Check tips often and change them if they look worn. These tips are available through your local pharmacy or medical supply store.

If your cane does not feel right, ask your physician or physical therapist to check the fit.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended as a substitute for professional care. Your physician should be consulted for personalized information.