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Walking with Crutches

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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- I. The client can demonstrate type of crutch walking as instructed.**
- A. Four-point gait
1. Move the right crutch forward 4 to 6 inches.
 2. Move the left foot forward to level of right crutch.
 3. Move the left crutch forward 4 to 6 inches.
 4. Move the right foot forward to level of left crutch.
- B. Three-point gait
1. Balance weight on crutches.
 2. Move both crutches and affected leg forward while body weight is supported on unaffected leg.
 3. Move unaffected leg forward.
- C. Two-point gait
1. Advance right foot and left crutch together.
 2. Advance left foot and right crutch together.
- D. Swing-to gait
1. Move both crutches ahead together.
 2. Lift body weight and swing to the crutches.
- E. Swing-through gait
1. Move both crutches ahead together.
 2. Lift body weight and swing through and beyond the crutches.
- II. The client can demonstrate rising from a sitting position.**
- A. Slide forward in chair and place unaffected leg slightly under or at edge of chair.
- B. Hold both crutches by the hand bars in one hand on affected side.
- C. Use the hand on the unaffected side to grasp the arm of the chair and push up to a standing position.

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- III. The client can demonstrate getting into a chair.**
- A. Stand close to chair with chair touching back of legs.
- B. Hold both crutches in one hand.
- C. Use the free hand to hold the arm of the chair.
- D. Bear weight on the crutches and lower self into the chair.
- IV. The client can state precautions when using crutches.**
- A. Only use crutches that have a proper fit:
1. The top of crutch should be about 1.5 inches below armpits.
 2. Elbows should be flexed 15 to 30 degrees.
- B. Do not lean or walk with weight on armpits because this may cause damage to nerves.
- C. Report any numbness or tingling down arms.
- D. Clear pathways by removing any objects that could cause falls.
- E. Avoid walking on slick or wet floor surfaces.
- F. Use only crutches in good condition.
1. The underarms should be well padded for comfort.
 2. The ends should have rubber tips to prevent sliding.
- G. Keep crutch tips clean.
- H. Avoid walking on wet or slippery floors.

REFERENCES

- Canobbio, M. M. (2006). *Mosby's handbook of patient teaching*. St. Louis: Mosby Inc.
- Perry, A., & Potter, P. (2006). *Clinical nursing skills & technique*. St. Louis: Mosby Inc.
- Timby, B. K. (2005). *Fundamental nursing skills and concepts*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.