



ADVICE

Falls Prevention Tips Number Four

A guide to the safe use of walking aids

- Are the rubber tips (ferrules) worn?
- Does the walking frame or wheeled walking frame stand square?
- Are the handles broken, split or worn?
- Are the wheels wonky?

Is the stick or walking frame the correct height?

- ▶ Stand up straight wearing the shoes you usually wear
- ▶ Hang your arm loosely by your side – there should be a small amount of bend at the elbow. Ask someone to measure the distance from your wrist to the floor – the top of the stick should be at wrist height.
- ▶ If you decide to cut the stick, do not forget to consider the thickness of the ferrule.

*** Walking frames are measured in the same way**

Is the stick being used in the correct hand?

- ▶ The stick should be held in the opposite hand to the damaged leg if possible

Are you able to use it safely in your environment?

- ▶ Is the frame or wheeled walking frame too wide to fit through the door squarely?

Do you need to carry things while using your walking aid?

- ▶ Consider the use of a wheeled walking frame with a tray or an upright specialised kitchen trolley

Do you have any concerns about using your walking aid?

- ▶ If so, consider speaking to your GP for advice and information.

**The Visual Impairment Team provides information, advice and mobility training where appropriate, to people with a significant loss of sight:
Countywide (01234) 718318**

Further information

For more information about how to avoid a fall, go to: www.ageuk.org.uk and search Staying Steady.

If you have any concerns or need advice about accessing NHS services, you can enquire in confidence on 01525 864405 or enquiries@bedfordshireccg.nhs.uk.

Leaflets available in this series:

1. A guide to what to do if you have a fall
2. A guide to safe footwear
3. A guide to safe transfers on/off chairs and bed
4. A guide to the safe use of walking aids
5. A guide to the safe use of wheelchairs
6. A guide to reducing the risk of falls due to medication
7. A guide to diet and nutrition
8. A guide to keeping warm

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