

Hints and Tips on walking with a wheeled walker

- > If using a wheeled walker causes any pain or aggravates an existing condition please seek advice.
- > If you have lost confidence in walking, but now have a wheeled walker to assist you, it is recommended that you slowly and gradually increase the distance that you walk to build up your exercise tolerance. Having someone with you initially may help to increase your confidence.
- > Make sure that any corridors, doorways or spaces between furniture that you walk through are wide enough for you and your wheeled walker to fit through safely. You should always compare the width of any wheeled walker with the corridor; doorway; or walking space in your home to make sure it will fit through easily.
- > To prevent tripping or falls, clear any clutter off your floor and away from doorways. Remove any loose mats and rugs. If you have frayed carpets we suggest that you tape them down securely with carpet/gaffer tape.
- > If you are having difficulty climbing the stairs then please go to problem “I have difficulty getting up and down my stairs”. Do not attempt to use your wheeled walker on your stairs.
- > If you start to find you are experiencing other difficulties apart from walking around, you may find it helpful to either carry out an on-line self-assessment on the new area of difficulty or visit your local Independent Living Centre. Alternatively, you can contact your local social services occupational therapy department and request an assessment.
- > Keep the walker in good condition and be aware that the brakes may need some adjustment from time to time.
- > When crossing the road it is safer to cross where there is a dropped curb.
- > Bear in mind that you may need help to negotiate steps.
- > Please take care going downhill when using a wheeled walker. You must have sufficient hand function to use the brakes. Please do not use on steep inclines.
- > Please be aware that 4 wheeled shopping trolleys in Supermarkets are not designed to be used as walking aids.
- > If you are going to sit or perch on your rollator, please make sure the brakes are on, it is on a flat surface and it is well-balanced.

Considerations when choosing a Wheeled Walker:

- > If using a wheeled walker aggravates any pain or existing condition please seek advice.
- > A wheeled walker can reduce the risk of falling and help you remain independent for longer
- > A wheeled walker will provide much more support than walking sticks and is more manoeuvrable than using a walking frame
- > Try before you buy – and make sure that the walker is right for you.
- > 3 wheeled models are not as stable as 4 wheels and most of them do not provide a perching stool
- > The larger the castor, the more manoeuvrable the product will be over uneven surfaces
- > Do you need a walker which you can use with one hand only?
- > How easy is it to fold (do you need one or two hands?)
- > Storage – consider where it will be kept in your home (remember it could be wet and dirty). Some stand upright when folded.
- > Transportation: e.g. can you manage this on public transport or in the boot of a car?
- > How heavy is it? Can you lift it easily, e.g. in and out of the car or your house, or do you have someone who can help you?
- > Do you need a seat with or without a backrest?
- > Will you need to carry things?
- > There are many different types of brakes so try to see which is best for you.
- > There are many different handles so try to see which is best for you.
- > Is there any maintenance agreement available or will you be able to maintain it yourself.
- > Do you need a model which includes accessories such as oxygen cylinder holders or crutch/cane holders?
- > Check whether it will arrive assembled.

How to set the height of the handles on your Wheeled walker (You will need someone to help you with this.)

- > Stand upright, keep looking ahead and put your arms straight down by your side.
- > Adjust the height of the handles until they come up to the crease of the wrist.

How to walk with a Wheeled Walker

- > If you have one weak/painful leg push the walker forward then step the bad leg and then the good leg. Do not let the walker get too far in front of you or let it run away with you.
- > Never use the walker to transport a person.
- > If your walker has a seat, apply and lock the brakes before you sit down.

- > If your walker has different seat height options follow the manufacturer's instructions for setting it.

Make sure your hand and grip position are correct

- > When using a rollator, it is important to ensure it is set at the right height for you, and that your hand and grip position is correct.
- > To achieve the correct position, you should have your thumb pointing forwards, as shown in the image below:



- > If your thumb is pointing inwards, this is an incorrect position. As shown in the image below:

