

Greater Baltimore Center for Rehabilitation Medicine

Acute Care Physical & Occupational Therapy

Stair Training

Using one crutch and one railing:

- Have your helper assist you on your “weaker” side when going up the steps. A gait belt can be used if one is available. When in use, palms and fingers should be oriented upwards.
- **When going up the steps**, hold onto the railing with one hand and crutch in the other. Place your “stronger” foot up on the step first and then bring up the crutch. Be sure to place your entire foot on the step for improved balance. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the back.
- **When going down the steps**, use the same railing when coming down and the crutch in the other hand. Lower the crutch down to the step below using it for support. Then slowly bring your “weaker” leg down to meet the crutch. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the front.



Scan QR code
for video of using
a crutch and a
railing.

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Using two crutches:

- Have your helper assist you on your “weaker” side when going up the steps. A gait belt can be used if one is available. When in use, palms and fingers should be oriented upwards.
- **When going up the steps**, place your “stronger” foot up on the step first and then bring up the crutches. Be sure to place your entire foot on the step for improved balance. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the back.
- **When going down the steps**, lower the crutches down to the step below using them for support. Then slowly bring your “weaker” leg down to meet the crutches. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the front.



Scan QR code
for video of using
2 crutches.

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Using a cane and a railing:

- Have your helper assist you on your “weaker” side when going up the steps. A gait belt can be used if one is available. When in use, palms and fingers should be oriented upwards.
- **When going up the steps**, hold onto the railing with one hand and cane in the other. Place your “stronger” foot up on the step first and then bring up the cane. Be sure to place your entire foot on the step for improved balance. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the back.
- **When going down the steps**, use the same railing when coming down and the cane in the other hand. Lower the cane down to the step below using it for support. Then slowly bring your “weaker” leg down to meet the cane. Your helper can hold on to the belt from the front.



Scan QR code for
video of using a
cane and a
railing.