

# Crutches

Crutches are used to partially or fully relieve weightbearing on a lower extremity. The majority of crutches are aluminum and have push-button pins for height adjustment along with height adjustments for the handles. For adults, crutches are available in two sizes; ones that fit a user 5'2" to 5'10" and the taller one that fits users 5'10' to 6'6". (Crutches for children are also made) Knowing the height of the user, in advance, would allow a correct choice.

## How to correctly fit for use of crutches

**Sizing** - Stand up tall, place one crutch up next to you, with the rubber tip about 6-8" away from your foot. Adjust the crutch so that the shoulder pad rests 2 finger widths under the armpit. This height allows for good mobility and will not cause aggravation to the axillary nerve in your armpit. To adjust the hand grip, allow your arm to be relaxed at your side (over the properly fitted crutch) and adjust to the area where your thumb bones meet your wrist. Elbows should be flexed about 30% for a proper fit. If it is not possible for a perfect fit, choose the notch higher, for better leverage.

**Care** – if there are wing nut adjustments, make sure that they are checked daily for tightness. Keep the tips of the crutches free of pebbles and carpet lint. (Both could provide slip hazards!)

