

## Wheeled chairs

Wheeled chairs provide individuals with the ability to go places when they are not able to walk due to weakness and/or disabilities.

**Transport chairs:** best for people who do not require full time use of the chair and do not need to be able to operate it themselves.

**Manual wheelchairs:** recommended for people who spend most of their day in the chair. It is operated by the chair user who has appropriate arm strength or by another individual.

**Power wheelchairs:** appropriate for people who can not push the wheelchair with their own arm strength.

## Important tips for wheeled chairs users

-It is very important to look at the weight restrictions for wheeled chairs as most wheeled chairs have a limit of 250 lbs.

-A healthcare professional such as an Occupational Therapist can measure you for a wheelchair to ensure proper fit and can make recommendations about the chair that would be most suitable for you.

## Footwear

Proper footwear support is important to your feet and ankles in order to promote safe walking and help prevent falls and/or injury.

### Recommended footwear should have:

- a low, slightly beveled, enclosed heel
- a wide, non slip sole
- laces and/or velcro fasteners to give you the best fit and stability
- a healthcare professional such as an Occupational Therapist can make recommendation for special shoes or insoles to ensure proper support and fit.



**Remember** using the appropriate equipment and ensuring it fits properly will make you safe and prevent falls when walking and/or moving around.

This publication has been developed and approved by Central Health's Falls Steering Committee. November 2011

**CH-POP 0014**



## Mobility aids: What you need to know!



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## Mobility aids: What you need to know!



# Mobility Aids

## What are mobility aids?

Mobility aids are tools to help people stay independent and safe, while doing the things that you enjoy every day.

## Examples of mobility aids:

- Canes
- Walkers (standard or wheeled)
- Wheeled chairs
- Footwear

## Where can you find mobility aids?

### Purchase

-Local Pharmacy, Medical Supply Stores and Department Stores.

### loan/Rental

- Local Pharmacy (Select Stores)
- Red Cross

### Funding availability

- Veterans Affairs Canada
- Health and Community Services : Special Assistance Program.

## Canes:

People with weakness, balance problems, fatigue and pain problems may prevent a fall by using a cane. Canes support up to 25% of a persons weight.

## Tips for using a cane

- Make sure your cane is the correct height.
- Hold  the cane on your strongest side.
- The cane and the opposite leg should move together.



## •When using stairs:

- take the first step up with the strongest "good" leg.
- take the first step down with the cane and the weaker "bad" leg.

## Safety tips

- The end of the cane should have a non-skid rubber tip. Replace worn out tips.
- Canes should have an ice pick for outdoor winter use.

## Did you know?

**Research has shown that cane use is linked with improved confidence and functional ability.**

## Walkers

Walkers support 50% of your weight and can be helpful for people with balance or walking problems.

**Two wheeled** walkers provide the best balance and safety for those recovering from surgery/illness and for those who are experiencing moderate to severe balance problems.

**Four wheeled** walkers come with or without seats and are best for those with mild balance problems. They can provide a sense of security and may help to increase endurance.

## How to fit your walker

- Hold the walker slightly in front of you.
- Hold the handles, your elbows should be flexed 30-40 degrees.
- You should not need to bend or lean forward.
- Try out walkers with different handgrips to find the best one for you.



## Walker safety tip

It is important to have walker fitting and training done by a professional to make sure you are using the size and type of walker that's best for you, and to learn how to use it safely to prevent falls.

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