

## Walker/Rollator Safety

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### Walkers:

A walker has 2 wheels in the front or no wheels at all. A walker provides more support than a rollator.

*If a walker is recommended by your health care provider, be sure to use it and do not switch to a rollator.*



### Rollators: (also called rolling walkers)

A rollator usually has 4 wheels (some styles have 3 wheels). They usually have brakes and a seat. A rollator can “get away from you” more quickly than a walker and provides less support.



## Adjusting your walker or rollator:

- Your walker or rollator should be adjusted to the correct height for you.
- If the handles are too high, it could cause arm/shoulder pain and may not provide the support you need, which could lead to a fall.
- If the handles are too low, it may cause you to lean forward and “hunch over”, which could cause back/neck pain and lead to a fall if you are putting too much weight on it.



*\*If you are unsure if your walker or rollator is adjusted to the correct height, please ask and I am happy to check it!*



## Safety Tips

1. In community settings, look around and make sure there are clear pathways. Watch for obstacles.
2. Keep the pathways in your home free of clutter, cords and throw rugs.
3. Don't be afraid to ask for help! We are happy to try to move something if we can to make a clear pathway for your walker/rollator.
4. Never push your walker or rollator into something to try to move it.
5. When walking always keep both hands on the hand grips. Use the rollator seat or a walker basket/tray/bag to transport items.
6. Stay "inside" the walker. Keep the walker close to your body- the further away from your body it is, the less support it can give you.
7. If you feel the rollator moving too quickly, use the brakes to control the speed.
8. Always keep the walker in front of you, facing out the front of the walker.
9. Turn using small steps.
10. Lock the brakes before sitting. Attempting to sit on an unlocked rollator is very unsafe.

## Sitting down and Standing up

*\*Knowing how to sit down and stand up safely when using a walker or rollator can reduce your risk of falling.*



### **Safely sitting down:**

1. Turn the walker (slowly using small steps) until the chair or bed is touching the back of your legs.
2. If you have a rollator, put the brakes on before sitting.
3. Reach back with your hands for the armrests or surface before sitting in a controlled manner.



### **Safely standing up:**

1. If you have a rollator, make sure the brakes are on before standing.
2. Always push from the arm rests/surface where you are sitting.
3. Never pull up from or lean on the walker/rollator (it could tip over).
4. Once standing, put each hand on the hand grips and, if you have a rollator, unlock the brakes before walking.

## Using the rollator seat safely:



1. Make sure your rollator is on a level surface.
2. Lock the brakes and slowly turn to sit.
3. Reach back for the handles and sit down slowly in a controlled manner.
4. Stand back up carefully and turn around slowly.
5. When both hands are on the hand grips and you are ready to move, unlock the brakes.

*\*Remember: Using a walker or rollator safely and correctly can reduce your risk of falling and improve your mobility.*

*I am always happy to answer any questions! Erin Curtin, OTR/L, Wellness Coordinator 413-437-5372*