

PAEDIATRIC NURSING PRACTICE MANUAL
SECTION 13

CARE OF THE CHILD WITH AN ORTHOPAEDIC CONDITION

13.6 MEASURING A CHILD FOR AXILLARY CRUTCHES

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Aim

To provide crutches which will enable the patient to mobilise safely

Key point

Teaching a patient crutch walking should only be attempted by staff who have had appropriate training.

PROCEDURE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Position the patient lying flat on back, shoulders, hips and legs in line and with the arms by the side.	
Allowing for the width of three fingers under the axilla measure to the heel.	This measurement equates to the length of the crutches.
Measure from the width of three fingers under the axilla to distal wrist crease.	This measurement equates to height of the hand grip on the crutches.
Position the hand grip according to the measurement obtained above.	Measure from the centre of the axilla pad on the crutches to position the hand grip.
Stand the patient up. Place the crutches correctly in position and check that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the shoulders are not raised; three fingers fit under the axilla the elbows are flexed about 30° 	
Proceed to instruct the patient in crutch walking if appropriate; otherwise return the patient to bed.	