



"All About WALKERS"

PURPOSE: Walking aids are designed to give the user added stability, and when used properly, increased independence. Your physician has ordered your walking aid for a specific reason. If your physician has given you specific instructions, you must follow them specifically. **If you have not seen a therapist or physician, please do so.**

TYPES: Walkers come in a variety of styles and sizes, each with a specific purpose. Walkers can come with seats, brakes, baskets, and/or wheels. Folding walkers are just as strong as non-folding walkers and have the added convenience of compact storage. Most walkers have a 250-300 pound weight limit. Check with **Kin-Care** for the specific weight requirements for your walker; heavier duty models are available by special order. **Make sure you read and understand all manufacturers' operating instructions.**

FITTING: A properly fitted walker is adjusted for height when wearing the shoes you will be wearing while walking with the walker. **Tops of the handgrips should be approximately at the hip joint, and the elbows will be slightly bent (20 - 30 degree angle). All walker legs must be adjusted to the same height.**

WHEELS & BRAKES: Walkers have many styles of wheels. Walkers with two wheels are very common and wheels must be in the *front* position. Walkers with four wheels must have a braking mechanism due to the possibility of losing balance. Braking mechanisms vary in their performance and braking ability, and the user must comply fully with the manufacturer's operating procedures. **Kin-Care** maintains many different types of walkers with brakes and brake add-ons.

USE: Your wrists must be straight and you must firmly grasp the handgrips. Your first step should be even with the back two legs of the walker, followed by a second step into the middle of the walker. The walker is then moved forward, and the steps are repeated (exactly the same as a normal walk). The feet do not meet side-by-side unless you stop. If your walker has a seat, the brake must be fully engaged when using it. If your walker is of the folding type, make sure the spring buttons are fully engaged.

MAINTENANCE: The rubber tips and wheels on your walker are very important and you should inspect them regularly. **Worn or damaged tips and wheels must be replaced immediately.** **Kin-Care** maintains a wide variety of walker tips and wheels that are inexpensive, plus other accessories (balls and sliders) that make walking easier. The handgrips should be checked for movement or slippage, if applicable, on a regular basis -- and replaced if damaged. **Braking mechanisms should be checked for braking ability at least monthly.** If your walker does not brake completely, please bring it to our store so adjustments can be made.

(Courtesy of www.Kin-Care.com)