Cane

A cane is a lightweight, movable device made out of wood or metal that provides assistance with balance when a patient walks. The mnemonic COAL (Cane Opposite Affected Leg) is used to remember how to hold a cane. Cane length should be equal to the distance between the greater trochanter and the floor, with the patient's elbows at a 15-30 degree angle. A quad cane, which has a four-pronged base, provides the most support and stability. Rubber tips are often used at the end of the device for safety.



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COAL

Cane-Opposite-Affected-Leg on Coal

The mnemonic COAL (Cane Opposite Affected Leg) can be used to remember how to hold a cane, which is on the stronger side of the body (opposite affected leg). Take a step with the affected leg and bring the cane forward at the same time. The stronger leg is then advanced past the cane to maintain balance.

Sizing a Cane

Sized Cane

To measure a cane's length, it is equal to the distance between the greater trochanter and the floor. The patient's elbows should be at a 15-30 degree angle while the hands are gripping the cane.

Quad Cane

Quad Cane

The quad cane offers the most support and stability by providing a four-pronged base. This type of cane is used when there is partial or complete leg paralysis or some hemiplegia.

Rubber Tips for Safety

Safety Rubber Tips

Canes should have rubber tips on the feet of the device for safety and to avoid the risk of falling.

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