

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL

Physical Therapy Services

PT Equipment Procedure # 8

Re: Training Stairs

Date: March 20, 2000

Revised: October 19, 2008

Description:

Small flights of wooden training steps with rails on both sides. Provides two heights of steps, 5" and 8". Stairs are used to:

Teach the use of stair ambulation in activity of daily living skills training,
Encourage effective weight shifting with gait training,
Strengthen lower extremities, and
Improve endurance.

Indications:

Patients with adequate balance necessary to ambulate with or without assistive devices on level ground, who need to use stairs in their daily lives to promote independence. Patients who need training in unilateral stance and foot clearance during gait.

Precautions:

Monitor pulse and respiration if cardiac or respiratory condition warrants it.
Monitor amount of weight-bearing closely if partial weight bearing is prescribed.

Procedure:

1. Use gait belt initially.
2. Instruct patient to approach stairs closely, placing one or both hands on railing (will vary with patient and situation).
3. Ascend stairs by stepping up with the "strong/good" leg first. Descend stairs by stepping down with the "weak/bad" leg first.
4. Do one step at a time if partial weight bearing, weak, or poor balance; do step over step if capable.
5. Clean as per Physical Therapy Cleaning Procedures.