

## **MEDICAL AIDS PROCEDURE ON SLOW COUNTY SCHOOLS**

Students may require use of a medical aids (crutches, slings, casts, splints, prosthesis, mental health assists, etc.) either permanently or temporarily due to a medical/mental health condition.

**Restrictions:** Any student requiring the use of a medical aid must bring a doctor's note to the school with the following information:

1. Diagnosis and/or reason for the medical aid.
2. How long the student will require the use of the medical aid.
3. Physical activity restrictions (PE, recess, etc.).
4. Physician's signature and contact information.

**Considerations:**

- **Equipment and supplies for all medical aids are provided by families.**
- **Transportation needs will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Student must be able to enter and exit the bus without assistance.**
- **Canes:**
  - a) Check the fit for student height. (Cane should be hip height when placed 6" to the side of the little toe with elbow at 20-30-degree angle.)
  - b) Cane should be kept on unaffected side.
- **Crutches:**
  - a) Check crutches for appropriate length (Place tip of crutch 6" in front of student and 4-6" to the side, tripod position. Arm-piece should be 2-3 finger widths below the axilla.)
  - b) Another student or staff may be needed to help carry the student's supplies.
  - c) Designate placement of crutches in the classroom so they do not become a safety hazard.
  - d) Student may need to leave class(es) early to avoid congestion in the hallway.
- **Walker:**
  - a) Check for fit to student's height. (Elbows should be flexed 20-30 degrees when hands are on the grips.) Student may use a "knee walker" where the knee of the affected leg is placed on the pad.
  - b) Do not allow the student to use the walker on the stairs or inclines.
  - c) Discuss evacuation plans for fire drills or other evacuations. Make sure staff and student are aware of the plan.
  - d) Designate placement of walker in the classroom to prevent a safety hazard for others.
  - e) Assistance from another student or staff member may be needed to carry the students supplies.
  - f) Student may need to leave class(es) early to avoid hallway congestion.
- **Prosthesis:**
  - a) Assess the student's ability to function with the prosthesis on.
  - b) Assess their ability to put on or remove prosthesis if necessary.
  - c) Determine if special plans are needed for fire drills or other evacuations. Make sure staff and students are aware of the plan.
  - d) Be aware of possible problems – inflamed joint, reddened skin area under the prosthesis, joint contracture, or incorrect fit of prosthesis.
- **Splint, Sling, or Brace:**
  - a) Observe for condition – worn areas, missing screws, frayed straps, cracks, dents, etc.
  - b) Assess student's ability to function with medical aid.

- c) Carrying supplies, writing, eating, toileting and other functions may be impaired by the medical aid. These should be assessed and planned for, and the staff and student should be made aware of the plan.
- d) Student may need a plan for evacuations and may need to leave class(es) early to avoid hallway congestion.
- Casts:
  - a) Check the condition of the cast – soft spots, cracks, dents, or edges that are crumbly should be reported to parent or doctor.
  - b) Remind student not to put anything inside the cast. Itching may sometimes be relieved by ice packs or tapping on the cast.
  - c) Carrying supplies, toileting, writing, eating and other functions may be impaired by a cast. This should be assessed, and any plans developed should be communicated to staff and student.
  - d) Evacuation plans may need to be developed for the student.
  - e) Assistance from another student or a staff member may be needed to carry supplies.
  - f) Student may need to leave class(es) early to avoid hallway congestion.
- Mental Health Aids:
  - a) Any aids brought in for mental health purposes (stress balls, chew objects, blankets, etc.) should be checked for cleanliness.
  - b) These objects must also be checked to ensure they are not a choking or strangulation hazard.
  - c) Mental health aids should be carried with the student and marked with identification.
  - d) Plans to educate class that these are not “toys” but needed for the student should be made to prevent other students wanting to “play” with the medical aid.

**References:**

Crutches. American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. Available at:

[http://fid-gv.org/uploads/Crutches\\_Instructions.pdf](http://fid-gv.org/uploads/Crutches_Instructions.pdf)

Limited Mobility Special Needs Factsheet. 2014. Available at:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/mobility-factsheet.html>

How to use Crutches, Canes, and Walkers. American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. Available at:

<https://orthoinfo.aaos.org/en/recovery/how-to-use-crutches-canes-and-walkers/>

VDH Guidelines for Healthcare Procedures in Schools. Virginia Department of Health. 2017. Available at:

[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/58/2016/12/VDH-Guidelines-for-Healthcare-Procedures-in-Schools\\_2017.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/58/2016/12/VDH-Guidelines-for-Healthcare-Procedures-in-Schools_2017.pdf)