

From the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Göteborg, Sweden.

SIMPLE CONTROL DEVICES IN EARLY AMBULATION FOLLOWING SURGERY OF LOWER LIMBS

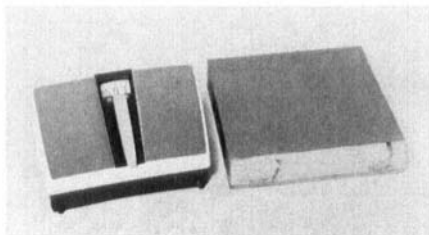
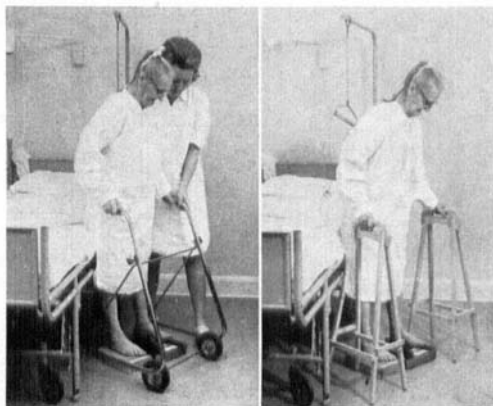
By

CARL HIRSCH & ELISABET LEWENHAUPT

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The general policy of orthopaedic departments is early ambulation provided the injured or reconstructed area can tolerate the forces coming into play when the patient is out of bed. In this connection the term "non-weight bearing" is often employed meaning that the patient should not be allowed to touch the floor with his foot. But non-weight bearing does not exclude forces coming into play by muscle action, often increased by leverage, for instance, in the upper and lower parts of the femur. However, if the foot is resting on the floor while the body weight is carried by crutches or canes several advantages will be achieved. Leg muscles can be allowed to rest or function with a smaller load. The patient will be able to control his position far better and will much quicker learn to move about. This is especially helpful for aged people.

With very simple devices we have been using a training program showing the patient how he should practice getting used to cane-walking. The foot of the affected side stands on a balance, the normal one on a wooden plateau, Figure 1. The patient being instructed how to use the canes during walking will feel how much weight he can place on the less weight-bearing side and adjust himself to the instructions given by the physiotherapist, Figure 2 and Figure 3. The gait can then be checked, if necessary by using a more sophisticated electronic walk-way for further control, Figure 4. Although the walk-way is part of our research equipment, the simple balance devices have given our physiotherapists a very reliable tool with which they can follow the instructions of the orthopaedic surgeon when he is anxious to curtail the patient's stay in bed.

*Figure 1.**Figure 2.**Figure 3.**Figure 4.*

SUMMARY

A simple device recording decrease of weight-bearing during walking consisting of a commercially available balance and a wooden plateau is illustrated. It has been proved to be most helpful in instructing the patient at the time of ambulation.

RESUME

Illustration d'un simple procédé enregistrant moins le poids porté pendant la marche et se composant d'une balance et d'un plateau en bois que l'on peut trouver dans le commerce. Il s'est avéré que cet instrument est de la plus grande aide pour l'instruction des malades au moment de l'ambulation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Eine einfache Anordnung, die verminderte Gewichtsbelastung beim Gehen registriert und aus einer im Handel erhältlichen Waage und einem hölzernen Plateau besteht, wird illustriert. Sie hat sich als äusserst behilflich bei der Belehrung des Patienten zur Zeit des Verumgehens erwiesen.