

# Dolomite<sup>®</sup> Gloss<sup>®</sup>

Guide to the selection and use of rollators



**Dolomite**

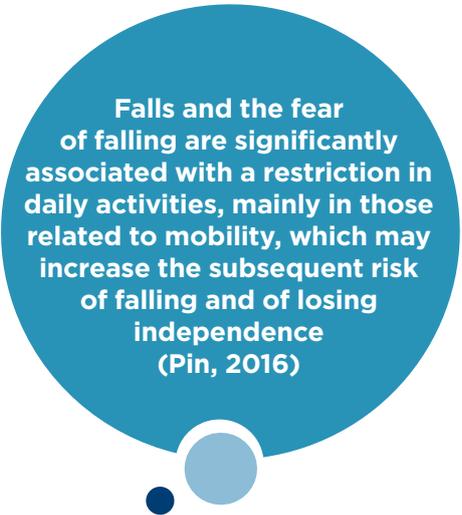


Yes, you can.®



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Falls and the fear of falling are significantly associated with a restriction in daily activities, mainly in those related to mobility, which may increase the subsequent risk of falling and of losing independence (Pin, 2016)

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# Introduction

Mobility, and in-particular walking, is often taken for granted until it becomes hindered in some way or an event such as a fall occurs. Often, only then do we reflect on the impact of being less ambulant and the activities that are affected as a consequence. Preventing falls whilst maximising engagement in social and other meaningful activities is key to supporting long-term health and well-being.

The Dolomite Gloss provides the perfect balance between risk management and maximising independence through innovative and creative design, to provide those who need extra support with a surface to rest on during longer activities.

## Key features at a glance:

- ▶ Lightweight, only 6.5kg\*
- ▶ High maximum user weight of up to 160 kg
- ▶ Handle height ranges from 795-920mm\*
- ▶ 4 different seat heights
- ▶ Vast range of accessories for even better assistance
- ▶ Only 190 mm wide when folded!\*\*

**40% of the over 65s living at home are estimated to fall at least once a year**

## Key facts

- ▶ The Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) reported that in 2017 to 2018 there were around 220,160 emergency hospital admissions related to falls among patients aged 65 and over, with around 146,665 (66.6%) of these patients aged 80 and over
- ▶ Falls were the ninth highest cause of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in England in 2013 and the leading cause of injury
- ▶ Unaddressed fall hazards in the home are estimated to cost the NHS in England £435 million

\* Gloss 600 model

\*\* Gloss 450mm is 240mm wide when folded.

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# Who needs a rollator?

**People who are looking for a mobility aid that will give them more support than a cane, should consider a rollator when they:**

- ▶ Want to remain active, this includes indoor use and walks outdoors, travelling, etc.
- ▶ Require more assistance than a cane can provide
- ▶ Need to sit often
- ▶ Are unable to lift a walker
- ▶ Need something more durable than a walker or cane
- ▶ Want to increase support in standing and walking
- ▶ Need to take pressure off one or both legs
- ▶ Need to transport small objects during short journeys

**Studies have suggested that users of rollators can walk faster and use less energy than users of walking (zimmer) frames**  
(Cetin et al, 2010).

### Benefits

#### **Benefits of a rollator over other walking aids**

The main benefit of a rollator is, when used appropriately, the rollator will allow the person to adopt a more fluent walking pattern due to the larger wheels and/or larger swivelling castors to facilitate effortless travel. However, rollators may be too mobile for people who need to lean or push against the frame for support, in this case a walker is recommended. The size of these walkers make them more suitable for outside use, but with adequate space, can be used inside.

# Clinical considerations

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Ensuring that the correct equipment is recommended is critical to users safety and independence. Ensure that clinical reasoning is robust and the appropriate evidence base is applied, taking into consideration the tips below:

## Key Points

### Consider these questions while assessing the user for a rollator are:

- ▶ The user's cognitive abilities to remember instructions for use?
- ▶ Will the user remember to apply the brakes before sitting down?
- ▶ Does the user's weight exceed the maximum user weight?
- ▶ Does the walker provide the user with sufficient support?
- ▶ Consider the user's upper limb strength, pain, balance, weight bearing (consider for use by adult users with minimal balance problems)
- ▶ Can the user apply and release the brake without any difficulty?
- ▶ Does the user have sufficient hand strength and coordination to use effectively and for extended periods, i.e. going down a ramp?

There are a number of factors to consider when determining the suitability of a rollator

# How to correctly measure a user for a rollator

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It is critical to ensure the rollator is at the correct height for the user:

- ▶ If the frame is too high, the user may find it difficult to straighten their elbows sufficiently and will be unable to take enough body weight through their arms
- ▶ If the frame is too low, it will encourage the user to bend over, creating a poor posture

The height may be deliberately set up at a lower height for users who tend to fall backwards, this will encourage them to lean forwards (Elmamoun and Mulley 2007). When measuring the height of the walking frame, the user must wear appropriate and supportive footwear.

## Measuring the height of the seat

The seat to floor height enables a safe and easy position for the user to sit down when required. To measure this, the measurement must be from the knees to the floor. This is then the correct height the seat will need to be at, the user's feet should rest flat on the ground when they sit down on their rollator.



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## A quick guide for Users

Falls can occur when people walk with their rollator too far out in front of them. It is important that they walk within the push handles, keeping close to the frame.

### Transferring

Training the user to transfer **off** a chair, bed or toilet:

8 The user must then lean forward until they feel some of their weight on their feet

7 Using their legs to stand as much as possible

6 It is important that the user does not walk forward until they have tested their balance and they feel strong enough to walk

1 Brakes must be engaged

2 User must move forward and ensure they are sat as close to the edge of the chair as possible

3 Keeping their feet as far under them as possible is essential. They must also aim to place their toes directly below the edge of the chair

4 Placing both hands on the arms/seat of their chair, OR one hand on the chair and one hand on the walker, to help get to a standing position. Being careful not to tip the walker by placing too much weight on one side of the walker as they stand

5 The brakes can then be disengaged

# Using the rollator around the home

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Around 1 in 3 adults over 65 who live at home will have at least one fall a year, and about half of these will have more frequent falls. These falls are often due to a combination of the tasks carried out at home and their requirement for more dynamic balance (for example, getting washed and dressed) and issues with the environment such as floor surfaces, thresholds, lighting and smaller spaces.

Ensuring that the home environment is not disabling or increasing the risks is crucial in supporting health, well-being and functional independence.

## General safety tips for the user:

- ▶ Door widths (especially bathroom doorways)
- ▶ When standing in the kitchen and bathroom: use the counters for support rather than the walker – but keep the walker within reach

### Pushing open a door

- ▶ Getting as close to the door as possible is key
- ▶ Push the door hard so that it swings open
- ▶ Moving the rollator into the doorway to block the door from closing
- ▶ The user is then able to walk forward through the doorway, using the rollator to hold the door open

### Pulling open a door

- ▶ User must get close to the door but leaving enough room for the door to open
- ▶ Moving the rollator so that it is at their side and not blocking the door
- ▶ While keeping one hand on the rollator and using the other to pull the door open
- ▶ Moving the rollator into the doorway
- ▶ The rollator will then block the door from closing completely
- ▶ The user is then able to walk forward through the doorway
- ▶ The rollator will hold the door open



### **For using the rollator indoors, some tips include:**

- ▶ Accessing in/out of the house steps by using a ramp
- ▶ Ensuring the rollator is narrow enough to access around house especially smaller hallways and narrow doors
- ▶ Removing rugs to avoid any trips/falls
- ▶ Consider if the user requires two rollators, one for upstairs use and one for downstairs
- ▶ Consider optional accessories:
  - Cane holder, for assisting the user to get upstairs
  - Tray or bag for transporting food or other items between rooms
  - Oxygen holder if the user is on oxygen

### **Why wearing the appropriate shoes is critical**

- ▶ When going for a walk with the rollator, it is essential that the user is wearing non-slip sneakers or shoes. If it is wet, slippery, or icy outside, consider walking indoors instead

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# Using the rollator in the kitchen

## General safety tips for the user:

- ▶ Do not walk with the rollator using one hand
- ▶ Do not overreach or lean on the rollator
- ▶ Get as close as possible to the item you are reaching for
- ▶ Use a rollator basket, bag or tray for transporting items
- ▶ When reaching for items at waist level or higher, face toward the object
- ▶ When reaching for items below the waist, turn sideways
- ▶ Do not reach beyond arm's length. Limit reaching above eye level and below knee height
- ▶ Make sure that the things you use in the kitchen regularly are the most convenient to get to and in one section of the room to limit reaching, bending and dynamic movement.

## Reaching to open upper kitchen cupboards

- ▶ When reaching for items in an upper cupboard, it is key for the user to stand directly in front of the cupboard, with the rollator in front of them or next to them and as close as possible to the cupboard. Placing one hand on the counter for support and reaching up with the other hand

## Using the rollator while at the sink

- ▶ Standing directly in front of the sink, the user must place the rollator as close to the sink as possible. Removing their hands from the rollator and either leaning forward onto their forearms, using both hands for the task or placing one hand on the sink for support, and the other hand for the task

## Opening the fridge

- ▶ Positioning the rollator at the side of refrigerator so that they are facing the door, the user can place one hand on the counter or side of appliance then reach to open the door with the other hand
- ▶ It is extremely helpful for the user to have a friend or family member to organise their most frequently used items on the top shelves, so that they are within easy reach

## Using the hob or oven

- ▶ For using the hob, the user must stand directly in front of the hob, with the rollator adjacent to them and as close as possible to the hob. Placing one hand on a non-heated surface and using the other to perform the task
- ▶ To use the oven, position the rollator sideways and adjacent to the oven. Placing one hand on the counter and using the other hand to open the door and put items in or take them out

## Reaching to open lower cupboards

- ▶ When reaching for items in a lower cupboard or dishwasher, stand sideways and behind the cupboard/dishwasher which needs to be opened. Putting one hand on the counter for support and use the other hand to open the door



# Outdoor Environment

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Fear of falls often leads to social isolation and the ability to get out of the house safely to engage in meaningful social activity is important for long-term mental health and well-being.

## Useful tips for the user to manage outdoor environments include:

- ▶ When ascending or descending slopes, the user must remember to squeeze the brakes to control the speed of the rollator
- ▶ Try to avoid kerbs and use slope access if possible
- ▶ When going up a kerb, tilt the frame back to lift the front wheels onto the kerb, followed by the back wheels. Ensuring all four wheels are on the same level, away from the edge of the kerb. Engage the brakes. then step up onto the kerb
- ▶ Going down a kerb, gently lower the frame down to the kerb. Ensuring all four wheels are on the same level, away from the edge of the kerb. Engaging the brakes, then stepping down from the kerb
- ▶ To overcome stairs, it is recommended that users use a walking stick as a replacement at this point - attempting stairs with a 4 wheeled rollator is highly not recommended

Walking outdoors has its difficulties, with different terrains, managing kerbs and slopes, the user is at high risk of falling.

### Transferring into a car

- ▶ The easiest and safest way for a user to transfer into a car is to hold onto the side of the car for support and slowly lowering themselves onto the seat

### Transferring out of a car

- ▶ To transfer out of a car safely the user must firstly bring their legs out of the car, one leg at a time. To get to a standing position the user must place the rollator directly in front of them, holding the crossbar of the rollator with one hand and pushing off the car seat with the other, the user is then able to slowly bring themselves to a standing position



# Choosing 'The correct' rollator

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## General safety tips for the user:

### When it comes to selecting a grip:

- ▶ Most rollators come with plastic grip, however, most rollators will be available with other options. They might consider foam grips or soft grip covers, especially if their hands tend to get sweaty. If they have trouble grasping with their fingers, due to arthritis, other joint pains or nerve problems in their fingers, they might prefer a larger grip
- ▶ Choosing the correct grip will relieve unnecessary stress on their joints and help prevent joint deformities. Whichever grip they choose, be sure it's secure so that it won't slip while they are using the rollator

### Common usage mistakes

- ▶ Not engaging the brakes when sitting or standing
- ▶ Starting to sit while still turning in front of the chair/bed/toilet/car
- ▶ Uneven steps
- ▶ Holding the rollator too close/too far away from them while taking steps
- ▶ Forgetting to use the rollator
- ▶ Holding the rollator with both hands while standing up and sitting down
- ▶ Leaning too far away from the base of support provided by the rollator
- ▶ Twisting away from the rollator while turning
- ▶ Sitting on the rollator while someone is pushing it

## Dolomite Gloss accessories include:

To fully customise your rollator to match the patient's individual needs, you can choose from a variety of accessories

- ▶ Back strap: Comfortable, safe and supportive while sitting
- ▶ Cane holder: For ease of use for those with additional needs
- ▶ Storage basket: Can easily be removed or be kept on the rollator while folded
- ▶ Tray: Detachable tray, for transportation of small items to other surfaces
- ▶ Kerb climber: Additional support, while climbing kerbs or uneven surfaces
- ▶ Oxygen tank holder: For ease of use for those with additional needs
- ▶ IV pole: For ease of use for those with additional needs
- ▶ Hemiplegic handle set: Optional adaptation, for one-handed or stroke clients
- ▶ Slow down brake: A safety feature to prevent the rollator rolling away
- ▶ Forearm support: Provides assistance to those with conditions like arthritis
- ▶ Cross bar: Makes it possible to use the rollator with one hand
- ▶ Brake booster: Provides extra braking force for those with weak hands

**Making the right choice maximises independence, safety and long-term health & well-being.**



## References

- ▶ Costamagna E, Thies SB, Kenney LPJ, Howard D, Lindemann U, Klenk J, et al. (2019) Objective measures of rollator user stability and device loading during different walking scenarios. PLoS ONE 14(1): e0210960. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0210960>

## Useful links

- ▶ <http://www.walker-facts.com/How-To-Use-a-Wheeled-Walker.asp>
- ▶ <http://www.canesandwalkers.com/walker-safety-tips/>
- ▶ <https://justwalkers.com/rollators-tips/>
- ▶ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/>
- ▶ <https://www.aginginplace.org/best-4-wheel-walkers-with-seats/>
- ▶ <http://humancare.se/product-category/guider-och-assistans/>
- ▶ <https://www.mountnittany.org/articles/healthsheets/2961>
- ▶ <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/drugs/15547-how-to-use-a-walker-in-the-kitchen>
- ▶ <https://www.saintlukeskc.org/health-library/discharge-instructions-using-walker-get-and-out-car#>



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