

# Wheelchair

These instructions are guidelines only. Use only as instructed by your healthcare provider.

## What is a Wheelchair Used For?

A wheelchair is used to provide functional mobility for individuals who find it difficult to walk, or cannot walk. The wheelchair may be self-propelled, or pushed by a caregiver.

## How Do I Use the Wheelchair?

**!** **WARNING** Stability and balance of the user in the wheelchair are essential to its safe operation. In order to ensure stability and balance:

- Always use your seat positioning strap, if available.
- Do not sit or transfer into the wheelchair unless the wheelchair is fully open and brakes are on.
- Do not lean forward out of the wheelchair any further than the length of the armrests ①. When leaning forward, ensure that the wheel casters ② are pointing forward.
- Do not attempt to reach objects if you have to pick them up from the floor by reaching down between your knees.
- Do not shift your weight toward the direction you are reaching as the wheelchair may tip over.
- Do not lean over the top of the back upholstery ③. This may cause you to tip over.
- Do not attempt to ride over curbs or obstacles. Doing so may cause your wheelchair to tip over and cause bodily harm to you or damage to the wheelchair.
- Do not tilt the wheelchair without assistance.
- Do not use an escalator to move a wheelchair between floors. Serious bodily injury may occur.
- Do not attempt to move up or down an incline with water, ice or oil film on it.
- Do not move across, go up, or go down ramps or slopes greater than a 4.8-degree angle (1" rise for every 12" length).

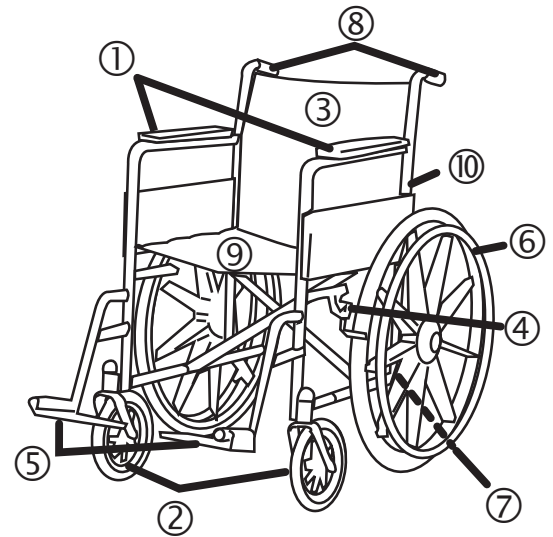


Figure 1: Wheelchair

## Transferring Out of Wheelchair

**!** **WARNING** Ensure brakes ④ are on when transferring into or out of the wheelchair.

**!** **WARNING** Consult your healthcare provider for guidance on the safest method to transfer into and out of the wheelchair.

## Moving the Wheelchair

### Self-Propelled

- To move forward, release the brakes ④, hold the handrims ⑥ attached to the rear wheels, and push forward.
- To move backward, release the brakes ④, hold the handrims ⑥ attached to the rear wheels, and pull back.
- Try to push the handrim ⑥ around as far as possible. This will allow easier and smoother movement of the chair.



## Assistant-Propelled

**⚠️ WARNING** When assisting a wheelchair user, use good body posture for your own safety. Keep your back straight and bend your knees whenever tipping the wheelchair or moving over curbs.

**⚠️ WARNING** The assistant must always let the wheelchair occupant know what he or she is doing, and avoid sudden movements.

- Going up curbs: Approach the curb squarely. Ask the wheelchair occupant to anticipate tipping, and to lean back. Tip chair back by stepping on tipping bar ⑦, and position both front wheels on top of the curb. Lift back wheels up to curb by pulling up on hand grips ⑧.
- Going down curbs: Roll down curbs slowly with the back wheels first.

**⚠️ WARNING** Tipping a wheelchair without a tipping bar ⑦ requires two assistants, one at either end of the wheelchair.

## Unfolding (Opening) the Wheelchair

### From Standing Position

- Move in front of the wheelchair.
- Push down and out on the sides of the seat upholstery ⑨, keeping your fingers pointing inwards (towards the center) to avoid getting them trapped. Push down until the wheelchair is fully opened.

### From Sitting Position

- On the wheelchair, grasp the back cane ⑩ closest to you.
- Tilt the wheelchair towards you, raising the opposite wheels off the ground.
- Push downward on the top of the armrest ① closest to you where the seat upholstery ⑨ is attached until the wheelchair is fully open.

## Folding (Closing) the Wheelchair

### From Standing Position

- Push the footrests ⑤ into the upward position.
- Move beside the wheelchair.
- Grasp the center of the seat upholstery ⑨ at the front and the back.
- Lift up until the wheelchair is fully closed.

### From Sitting Position (Figure 2)

- Push the footrests ⑤ into the upward position.
- With both hands, grasp the middle of the seat upholstery ⑨ at the front of the back edge and lift up.
- Continue to close the wheelchair by grasping the back cane ⑩ furthest from you and pulling the armrest ① towards you.

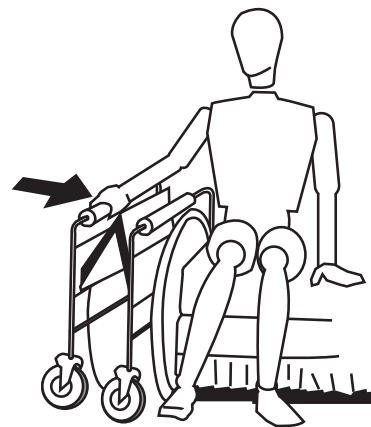


Figure 2: Closing the wheelchair



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*Please ensure that equipment returned to the Red Cross is clean and in good condition.*