

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Product Recognition Program

Report of the review of the Airgo eXcursion line



Available online at www.caot.ca/prp



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Specific questions related to this product(s) (including usage, availability, pricing, etc.) should be addressed directly to the manufacturer and/or distributor. Please visit airgomobility.com. Concerns or questions related to the content of this report should be addressed to Julie Lapointe, Director of Professional Practice, at jlapointe@caot.ca or at 1(800) 434-2268 ext. 260

The conclusions presented in the current report are derived from the best information available. In the case that new information becomes available and grants a modification to the conclusions, CAOT reserves the right to update and issue a new report of this product at any time.

Acknowledgement

The generation of this report would not have been possible without the contribution of occupational therapists and members of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT).



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Executive Summary

The Airgo eXcursion line is a line of rolling walkers (or rollators) with four wheels that features a built-in seat, contoured backrest and a zipped carrier basket. Reviewers were unanimous in their decision to recommend that the Airgo eXcursion be accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program. Information regarding the performance of the product are provided in this report and recommendations are formulated.



The Airgo eXcursion Line is recognized by CAOT.





Review report

The purpose of this product

The Airgo eXcursion line is a line of rolling walkers (or rollators) with four wheels that features a built-in seat, contoured backrest and a zipped carrier basket. It includes a curb climber and a clip that holds the walker in a folded position to ease its storage or transport. It can support clients up to 181 kg (400 lbs), and ranging in height from 4 foot, 3 inches to 6 foot, 11 inches, which makes it suitable for a wide range of client body types.

This product could improve opportunities for social interactions, by increasing the client's tolerance for mobility, and providing a seat for rest as needed. According to reviewers' experience, clients may find it difficult to begin using a walker instead of a cane, as they feel it appears more "disabled". However, as it can normalize antalgic gait patterns and decrease pain in ambulation, clients can soon find it affords them more social opportunities and increases their tolerance for ambulation.

Performance of the product (efficacy, usability, safety, reliability, durability)

- Reviewers found that the Airgo eXcursion is straightforward to use and that it wheels easily while walking.
- The brakes are easy to use, easy to adjust and hold tight when locked, but the braking action may be difficult to regulate while walking (e.g., down slopes) because the brakes tend to grab.
- The presence of a curb climber is an important feature of this product. Reviewers found it awkward to use because the wheels are far apart and the user has to abduct the leg to reach it.
- The folding basket has a solid top to protect items in inclement weather.
- The style of hand grips was found to be very comfortable as they maintain the wrists in a neutral position when walking. This is important because some users may have arthritis.
- Handle height adjustments are simplified by the fact that no tools are required to make adjustments.
- Overall it appears very robust with minimal maintenance required. The cable brake system does need periodic maintenance. With time the system that tightens the cables becomes loose, so the brakes do not hold. The instructions that come with the walker do provide information on tightening the brake cables.
- There is a concern that brake cables may catch on things, compared to rollators with the brake cables which run inside the metal tubing.
- The backrest is wide and is positioned low on the back of the seated person. If the person leans back, it may cause their hips to slide forward.
- Brake handles, handle height adjustment knobs, brake pad lever and rear tires all are placed outside the frame of the walker making these 'hard' bits the first point of contact with the environment leading to a potential for damage of the built environment.
- Some pressure needs to be exerted to open the walker fully into its most stable position. The instructions warn about the need to hear the "click" to be sure it is fully opened, but users may not read or heed that instruction.



- The folding, zipped nylon carrying bag is very easy to use and practical.
- The clip to hold the walker in the folded position is useful for storage or when lifting the walker into a car. It is a great feature not commonly included in such products.
- One distinctive feature is the presence of reflectors built into the handles. That is a good safety feature for evening or night use.
- The accompanying brochures provide instructions in assembly and in using the device as a rollator, including cautions. The brochure is provided in 6 languages and a font size of approximately 10 – 12 point, black on white. Some seniors may have difficulty reading the instructions in this font size.

Important recommendations

The only minor safety issues related to this product are that brake cables may catch on things and that some components are placed outside the frame which may damage the built environment. Before recommending this product, reviewers advised to ensure that the client's environment allow sufficient room for this walker to be maneuvered safely.

Economic considerations

The price of this product is competitive.

Scientific evidence

- Evidence supports the effect of a wheeled walker in reducing physiologic costs of ambulation and improving gait patterns, but their impact on preventing falls is reported as mixed (O'Hare, Pryde, & Gracey, 2013). As with any assistive device, the user needs assessment to determine the most appropriate device, instruction in safe use, and follow-up after device provision. Further, a walker must be appropriately adjusted for the individual user. Liu (2009) reported a high prevalence of incorrect height and poor posture while using rolling walkers.
- To our knowledge there is no published research on the Airgo eXcursion Line. A quick search in PubMed and Google Scholar yielded no result.

Review committee

Three occupational therapists with over 25 years of work experience reviewed this product. All of them were involved in seating clinic teams and became official authorizers of mobility aids in their own province.



Final recommendation

This product would be appropriate for adults who need assistance/support with ambulation. It may provide a sense of reassurance for those at risk of falling; it may increase the distance individuals can walk; it may be recommended after lower extremity surgery (e.g., joint replacement); and it may reduce pain in those with lower extremity issues (e.g., arthritis). Reviewers recommended that the Airgo eXcursion Line be accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program.

References

- Liu, H. H. (2009). Assessment of rolling walkers used by older adults in senior-living communities. *Geriatr Gerontol Int*, 9(2), 124-130. doi:10.1111/j.1447-0594.2008.00497.x
- O'Hare, M. P., Pryde, S. J., & Gracey, J. H. (2013). A systematic review of the evidence for the provision of walking frames for older people. *Physical Therapy Reviews*, 18(1), 11-23. doi:10.1179/1743288X12Y.0000000036