with a defect in gait, which is not uncommon in elderly patients with arthritis, but the exercise must be supervised.

Table 2

Proper Cane Use

- Cane length should be equal to the distance between the upper border of the greater trochanter of the femur and the bottom of the heel of the shoe.
- Elbow flexion should be about 20 degrees.
- Hold cane in hand that is contralateral to the affected limb.
- Move the cane with the affected limb.
- When climbing stairs, use the healthier limb first.
- When coming down stairs, use the cane and affected limb first.

Table 3

The OA Pain Pathway

OSTEOARTHRITIS PAIN

→ Begin nonpharmacologic therapies
→ If effective, monitor the patient
→ If not effective, look for effusions
→ If present, consider aspiration and intra-articular corticosteroids
→ If not present, consider the step approach to pain management
→ Acetaminophen #1
→ Topical analgesics #2
→ COX-2 inhibitors (and NSAIDs, nonacetylated salicylates) #3
→ If effective, monitor the patient
→ If not effective, consider tramadol therapy #4
→ Consider opioid analgesics, using short-acting for episodic pain and long-acting for continuous pain #5
→ Not effective? Consider pain clinic consultation
→ Effective? Monitor the patient

Adapted from reference 12