**6. The Drag**: (slide 36 – 39; video 6)

This is an **ACTIVITY/EXERCISE – NOT a way of walk**ing! Refer to the prior section about Heel Strike before attempting this! This is a technique to teach you to activate heel strike to make your brace work properly. **This is NOT a way to walk!**

1. **Purpose**:
2. Learn what heel strike feels like
3. Learn to pull your leg forward with your hip rather than hip flexors
4. Learn what it feels like to have the brace throw you forward
5. Learn to integrate heel strike into walking pattern
6. **Drag:**
7. MIRROR: You would benefit from doing this activity in front of a mirror so that you can judge whether you are doing it correctly
8. HOLD ON to a counter with your side to the counter
9. Start by standing on your more involved (weaker) leg under you and your stronger leg back – looks like you are taking a step
10. ROTATE the HIP of your stronger leg forward.
11. Let your toe of the back shoe DRAG forward as the HIP rotates forward
12. This should give your stronger leg the momentum to swing the leg forward and land on your stronger leg (heel) HARD!
13. Don’t take a step! Just want get used to the feel of landing HARD on your stronger heel (NOT flat foot) – If you are on a kitchen floor you should hear contact with the floor. It is difficult for your knee to collapse when you do this correctly if there is no knee flexion contracture!
14. Repeat/Practice many times with your stronger leg! You need to learn what it FEELS like to do this activity so that you can later better judge whether you are doing it correctly with your weaker leg.
15. If you do not rotate the hip enough, and do not drag the toe you will not do it right. You do not need to use your hip flexor muscles to do this motion. Watch the video carefully.
16. SWITCH LEGS: Now put the less strong leg/hip back and do this same activity with your weaker leg back. It should look like what you did with your other leg. Watch this in the mirror and the video.
17. This activity can also be done as diagonals that your DBS Orthotist recommends. And the important thing is that you get that hip only rotated forward first

**C. TAKING A STEP**:

1. Start in OSP
2. Then move stronger leg back and weaker one forward
3. HOLD ON to counter!
4. Rotate hip forward and let it pull your leg forward (no toe drag) so that you have heel strike. Keep the movement going as you move your other foot
5. Getting thrown forward: You may feel like you are getting thrown forward when you start taking steps. This is expected and normal. That is why these are DYNAMIC Braces! Do NOT do this until you can do it correctly.
6. Keep practicing. If after a few steps on each leg you are advancing your leg with your hip flexor, STOP! Go back and either rest or start over!
7. NO FATIGUE please!

**D. Challenges to Success:**

1. Knee flexion contracture (your knee doesn’t straighten all of the way)- you will not be able to do the Drag until the contracture is stretched out. Get help!
2. Hip flexion contracture (tightness) - you might be able to do the Drag with less efficiency without stretching it out
3. Plantar Flexion contracture (foot and toes pointing downwards at all times) – With a knee flexion contracture, and with the heel of the shoe built up sufficiently, one might be able to get heel strike
4. Lack of hip rotation
5. Hip abduction contracture (leg is stuck out to the side)
6. Pain anywhere in lower body
7. Fatigue
8. Increased muscle tone in either or both legs may make this movement difficult
9. Your brain telling you: “It can’t be done; I will fall; my knee won’t hold; my body doesn’t do that and, and, and…”
10. These obstacles don’t mean you cannot succeed. They mean your way of doing them may need to be adapted.