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“ WE FIX HEALTHPLANS ”

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Shoveling snow

Shoveling snow can be a daunting athletic feat. While we wouldn't go out and do four hours of running or aerobics without training to get into shape, many of us trudge out to clear the driveway and sidewalks without much thought or preparation.

Try these tips for safe shoveling:

- Shop for a snow shovel that fits you. With one hand on the end of the handle and the other about 18 inches above the blade, your hands should be about shoulder width apart.
- Obviously, lighter is better. Check out ergonomically designed shovels.
- Lift with your legs, bending your knees. Do not bend at the waist to lift a load of snow.
- Don't twist your back to throw snow aside. Move your feet instead.
- Take breaks. Don't tackle the whole 20-inch blizzard on your driveway at once.
- Do stretching exercises before you start shoveling, just as athletes do before any kind of workout. It's good for your heart and your muscles. After shoveling, cool down with some stretching and mild exercise, too. Try to stay in shape in winter, even though it's tempting to put another log on the fire and head for the couch. Going from no activity to strenuous shoveling can cause problems.
- If you have a heart condition, consult your doctor before shoveling shown. If you experience chest pain or tightness and shortness of breath, get medical help immediately.



This material is provided for your general information only and is not intended as medical or other professional advice. For more information and answers to health concerns, consult your physician or other health care professional.

Source: Healthy Communities by Allina Hospitals & Clinics

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