

IDEAS FOR SHOVELING

SMART



Well we are at that time of the year again. The snow, ice, and freezing rain are falling again. Time to pull out the shovels, brooms, and snow blowers. There is a right way and a wrong way to shovel snow. Here are a few tips to try and improve your technique and help to make a difference in how your body and back feel the next day.

1. Your spine does not tolerate twisting movements as well as other movements, so bend those knees and keep your back straight while lifting with your legs. Step into the direction you are throwing the snow, do not twist and throw the snow across your body. To avoid rotating your back, shovel at a right angle to your driveway so all you have to do is toss the snow forward.
2. Take frequent breaks to give your back and knees a rest.
3. Lift smaller loads of snow instead of larger ones. Always try to bend your knees, and lift with your legs and not with your back.
4. When able, wait until the afternoon to shovel. Most slipped discs occur in the morning because there is increased fluid pressure in the disk because your body has been at rest all night.
5. If large amounts of snow are forecast, shovel often to keep the loads lighter.
6. Use a shovel that fits. A shovel with a shaft that is approximately chest high is the correct height. This allows you to keep your back straight when lifting. Using shovels with a short shaft causes your back to bend more to lift the load. A shovel that is too long increase the weight too much at the end.
7. Save money and avoid the curved handled shovels (ergonomic shovels.) Some of these shovels have scooping ends that hold too much snow, thus being too heavy. Often these shovels are too deep and twisting the shovel to unload will hurt the wrists.
8. Finally, and most important, if you have children make them shovel, your back will thank you in the morning.

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE CARING STAFF AT IMGPT. YOUR HOMETOWN
THERAPY CENTER. HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE WINTER.**

610-944-8140