

Healthy Stretching for **S n o w** Removal

Did you know 15 minutes of *light* snow shoveling is considered *moderate* physical activity, and contributes to 25% of the total amount of exercise Canada’s Physical Activity Guide recommends per day (ACSM, 2005)?



The bad news is, the rate of heart attacks tends to be higher after the first big snowfall. This may be due to the sudden demand shoveling in cold weather places on your heart and body.

People who are at risk for a heart attack should consult a physician before winter begins.

Stretching for Smart Shoveling



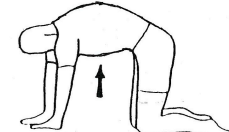
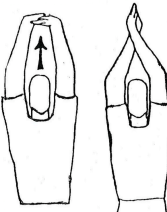

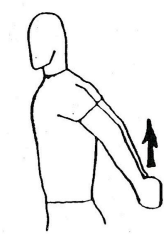
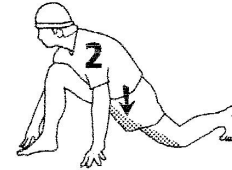
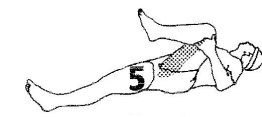

1. WARM UP

March on the spot, climb the stairs, or go for a brisk walk for at least 5 minutes BEFORE you start shoveling.

2. STRETCH





After warming up, do the following stretches for your back, upper body, and legs. **Hold each stretch for 10 seconds and release. Repeat 10x (on each side if applicable).**

HEADS UP! Your back is extremely vulnerability *when you first wake up* because it stiffens when you sleep. If you plan on shoveling the driveway shortly after waking up, it is critical to **warm up and stretch your back!**

BACK	 <p>Pelvic tilts. Hold the small of your back down into the floor by tightening your abs. Feel the small of your back lift off the floor and then repeat.</p>	 <p>Shoulder bridges. Interlock your fingers in front of your chest, palm facing towards you. Drop your chin and round your back.</p>	 <p>Cat & Cow. On all 4's, round your spine to the ceiling, tucking your tailbone, and dropping your head. Reverse the movement and tilt your tailbone up and look up.</p>
ARMS	 <p>Up & Reach. Interlock your fingers and raise your arms above your head, palms facing out. Cross your arms so your palms face each other.</p>	 <p>Triceps & Sides. Raise both arms and bend one elbow back. Looking straight ahead, hold the elbow back and tilt to one side.</p>	 <p>Chest & Shoulders. Place arms behind back, hands together. Roll shoulders back, open up your chest, and lift hands towards the ceiling.</p>
LEGS	 <p>Hip Flexor. Lunge with one leg forward, keeping the knee behind toes. Bend the other knee, lower your hips, and look straight ahead.</p>	 <p>Hamstrings. Lie on your back and bring one knee towards your chest. Keep a slight bend on the other leg. Hold your leg under your knee as you pull in.</p>	 <p>Glutes. Lie on your back and cross one knee to the other side until it touches the ground. Extend your opposite arm and tilt your head towards your arm.</p>

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers. (2012). Snow Removal Ergonomics: 2nd Edition. Retrieved from <http://www.ohcow.on.ca/>

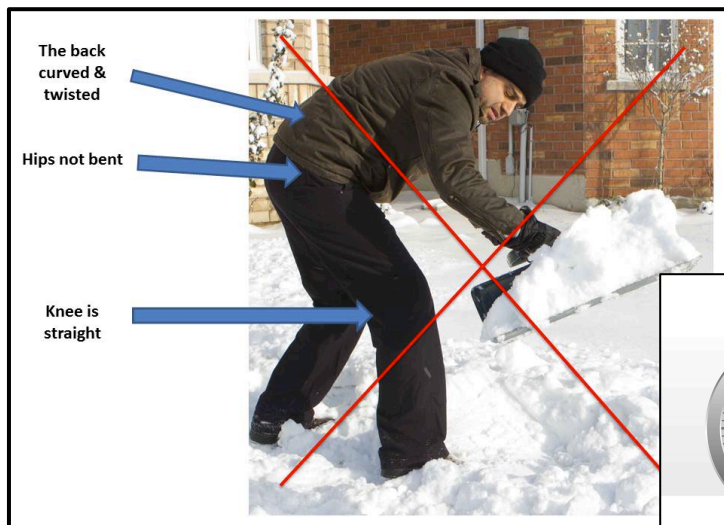
Guidelines for Snow Shoveling

			
Keep feet wide apart. Place front foot close to shovel.	Put weight on front foot. Use leg to push shovel.	Shift weight to rear foot. Keep load close to body.	Turn feet in direction of throw.

(Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety, 2011)

6 TIPS TO REMEMBER WHEN SHOVELING

- ❖ **Clear snow early and often.** It's lighter and easier to move after it has just fallen.
- ❖ **Pace yourself.** Start slow and only lift small amounts of snow when it is heavy. Take rest breaks every **15 minutes!**
- ❖ **Watch your footing.** Keep feet hip distance apart and the shovel close to your body. Avoid trying to throw snow too far in slippery conditions. If you are prone to slipping or falling, purchase anti-slipping footwear/cleats.
- ❖ **Push, not lift.** One of the best techniques is to split your driveway in a quadrant, and *push snow from the center of the driveway to the side. Then, lift snow from there.*
- ❖ **Use your legs.** When lifting snow, only fill your shovel **half** full. Bend your knees, keep your back straight, tighten your stomach, and lift with your **legs**.
- ❖ **Do NOT twist!** Do not reach back to push snow. If you need to move the snow to the side, reposition your feet to *face the direction the snow will be moved.*



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