

DIGGING YOURSELF OUT... SNOW SHOVELING SAFETY



- **YOU ARE EXERCISING** Snow shoveling is both a cardiovascular and muscular work-out, so approach it with the same principles you use when you go to the gym.
- **HYDRATE!** Hydrate yourself before and during snow-shoveling with plenty of water, and avoid caffeinated beverages before shoveling, which can constrict your blood vessels, compromising circulation.
- **DRESS APPROPRIATELY:** Wear layers so you can shed as you warm up and add back as you cool off.
- **STRETCH YOUR MUSCLES:** Stretch your shoulders and chest out by standing in a doorway. Place your hands on one side of the doorway, and then step through the doorway until your arms straighten and you feel a good stretch across your chest and arms. Hold for 30-60 seconds.
- **GOOD EQUIPMENT:** Use a shovel with a smaller-sized plastic blade; after all, snow is heavy enough to lift without extra shovel weight!

- **DO LESS LIFTING!** Push snow to boulevards and yard edges using a scoop type-shovel. Use a smaller-bladed shovel for areas where you must scoop and lift the snow onto a pile.
- **USE YOUR LEGS:** When lifting snow, remember to engage your abdominal muscles and bend your knees, using your legs to lower and lift your body and the shovel. If you bend from the waist, as shown in this photo, you could easily injure your back!
- **AVOID FATIGUE:** After you have lifted a shovel full of snow, keep it close to your body. Then, if you must turn to place the snow on a pile, lift your feet and turn your entire body. Twisting from the torso could injure your spine and strain your back and hip muscles.



- **PACE YOURSELF!** There's no need to be a snow-warrior and shovel the entire walk at once. Take frequent breaks to stretch and rest, then return to the task when you are ready. Remember to go slowly; rushing is a common cause of injury.
- **ASK FOR HELP:** Snow shoveling goes faster with two people. And remember, spring will be here soon!