

Lift Light, Shovel Right



Don't let winter be a pain in the back - 'Lift light, shovel right.'

Education and preparedness are the keys to correcting this seasonal problem. The Newfoundland and Labrador Chiropractic Association offers the following preventive measures to help keep backs in shape:

1. **Warm-up.** Before beginning any snow removal, warm-up for five to ten minutes to get the joints moving and increase blood circulation. A good warm-up should include stretches for the back, shoulders, arms and legs. This will ensure that your body is ready for action.
2. **Don't let the snow pile up.** Removing small amounts of snow on a frequent basis is less strenuous in the long run.
3. **Pick the right shovel.** Use a lightweight push-style shovel. If you use a metal shovel, spray it with Teflon first so snow won't stick.
4. **Push, don't throw.** Push the snow to one side and avoid throwing it as much as possible. If you have to throw, avoid twisting and turning – position yourself to throw straight at the snow pile.
5. **Bend your knees.** Use your knees, leg and arm muscles to do the pushing and lifting while keeping your back straight.
6. **Take a break.** If you feel tired or short of breath, stop and take a rest. Stop shoveling immediately if you feel chest or back pain.

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