



As cold weather and the first snow arrive it is important to remember that shoveling or even using a snow blower is vigorous exercise. Before engaging in any snow removal activity be sure to check with your doctor because snow removal does place a significant amount of stress on the heart.

As with any exercise remember to dress appropriately for removing snow, water repellent clothing in light layers is best when combined with a warm hat and mittens as well as warm non-slip boots. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) also recommends people do a light warm-up before clearing snow and remember since snow removal is vigorous exercise take frequent breaks and drink water to avoid dehydration. The shovel should be the proper size and height for your body build, the proper size shovel and the use of the tool grips will maximize your strength for removing the snow. If possible push the snow rather than lift it, but if you must lift the snow follow these easy tips:

1. Squat with your legs shoulder width apart, knees bent and back straight.
2. Lift with your legs and avoid bending at the waist.
3. Scoop small amounts of snow and walk to the dumping spot rather than throwing the snow with the shovel, this will help avoid extra strain on your spine and unnecessary twisting.
4. Remove large amounts of snow in pieces, rather than all at once.

If you feel shortness of breath, chest pain or other signs of a heart attack, stop immediately and seek medical attention. Back pain persisting for more than two days may be the sign of a muscle strain or injury and a doctor should be consulted.

Every patient must have a prescription for rehab from their physician. A patient has the choice to go where they know they will get the best treatment for their specific goals. At Tri-Rehab, your insurance coverage will be verified and your first appointment will be scheduled within 24 hours.

For more information on related health and wellness, log into <http://www.trirehab.com>.