

# Snow Shoveling Tips



For safe and pain-free snow removal



- 1) Think of the Basics:** Dress appropriately so that your body stays warm and dry and wear proper footwear to prevent falls. Make sure you can see the area you are shoveling or snow blowing so that you are aware of any ice patches or uneven surfaces. Even though it is cold out, it is still important for the whole body, including the joints and connective tissue, to stay hydrated so be sure to drink enough water.
- 2) Start Early:** It is best to clear snow often to avoid lifting heavy, packed snow. Be sure to take frequent rest breaks and stop if you are experiencing any shortness of breath or chest pain. Don't rush through snow removal because you may neglect to pay attention to proper body mechanics and are more prone to injury or accidents.
- 3) Have the Right Shovel:** Use a shovel that is comfortable for your height and weight (not too heavy or too long). Hands should be spaced approximately 12 inches apart for increased leverage and greater stability.
- 4) Proper Lifting Technique:** Keep the heaviest part of the load close to your body at your center of gravity. Bend at the knees and hips, not at the back, to avoid muscle or disc injury. Be sure to use your leg muscles to lift.
- 5) Body Mechanics:** Never rotate at the waist and lift at the same time. Try to push snow as much as possible instead of lifting. Do not hold a shovel full of snow with arms outstretched. Also avoid throwing snow over your shoulder or to the side as that puts more stress on the spine. Listen to your body; if something is painful then stop – it is the body's way of communicating a problem. Remember that working through the pain is only going to augment any potential injury. Ask for help if you need it!
- 6) What if you did get hurt?** If your pain is not diminishing after a few days, call Regain Physical Therapy 586-3819 for an evaluation and treatment to help get you feeling better!



**REGAIN**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY

3819 Monroe Ave  
Pittsford, NY 14534  
586-3819  
[www.RegainPT.com](http://www.RegainPT.com)

