

GOOD PRACTICES FOR SHOVELLING SNOW

Baie-Comeau, January 9, 2024 – Shovelling snow is an excellent activity to remain active. The Direction de santé publique de la Côte-Nord wants to give a few tips and some advice to reduce the risk of injury and take advantage of the physical and psychological benefits of this winter activity.

Before shovelling

Before stepping outside, you should:

- Plan the required time based on the amount of snow to shovel. If the time you planned is too short, you will tend to rush, which increases the risk of injury.
- Dress appropriately. Opt for warm clothes with moisture wicking capabilities. If you are cold, you risk rushing and thus increasing the risk of injury.
- Warm up your body to prepare it for the task. Opt for a warm-up of at least 5 minutes. It is best to start slowly and to respect your capabilities.

The proper technique

Shovelling is a comprehensive physical activity that combines muscular and cardiovascular effort. Adjusting your shovelling style to your own capabilities is important in order not to demand too much of your muscles and your heart.

- Place your feet shoulder width apart.
- Bend your knees.
- Keep your back straight and contract your abdominal muscles.
- Avoid turning your trunk.
- Point your feet and the rest of your body in the direction where you want to throw the snow.
- Transfer your weight when you throw snow.
- Keep a steady pace based on your capabilities.
- Take breaks when you are tired.

Do not forget to hydrate regularly. Sedentary individuals with health problems (angina, high blood pressure, musculoskeletal pain, asthma, etc.) should consult a physician before undertaking this type of activity.

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