



# SAFETY TALK

## SHOVELING BODY MECHANICS

As the winter months are approaching, shoveling can contribute to various injuries to the shoulders, back and muscles of the body. Most of the injuries are due to excessive bending and twisting while carrying a heavy load of snow. Here are some tips to help keep you safe while shoveling:

1. **Warm up Before Shoveling**— Take a few minutes to stretch, move around and get the blood flowing. Shoveling counts as exercise, the average person burns 370-715 calories per hour shoveling snow. Just as you would warm up for traditional forms of exercise be sure to prepare your body for shoveling.
2. **Small Loads**—Start with smaller loads the first few minutes to ensure you are fully warmed up.
3. **Push the Snow**—Pushing snow is easier than lifting the snow. A push/ sleigh shovel may be easier.
4. **Hand Positioning**— Switch your hand positioning half way through the job to reduce repetition on your body.
5. **Take Breaks**—Don't try to finish the job all at once; divide the work into smaller segments, especially when there is large amounts of snow.



*Safety is everyone's responsibility!*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
FACILITY: \_\_\_\_\_

SAFETY TALK LEAD BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

WHAT IS ONE ACTIVITY YOU CAN DO TO WARM UP BEFORE SHOVELING?

DOES MY SHOVEL ALLOW FOR SAFE BODY MECHANICS? IF NOT, IS THERE A DIFFERENT SHOVEL I COULD BE USING?

WHAT IS ONE THING LEARNED FROM THIS SAFETY TALK THAT YOU CAN INCORPORATE INTO YOUR SHOVELING?

EMPLOYEE CONCERNS & IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

FOLLOW UP ON CONCERNS:

If you have any feedback on the Safety Talks program or a suggestion for a Safety Talk, please contact a member of the Wellness & Safety Team or email [healthpeihr@ihis.org](mailto:healthpeihr@ihis.org)

Safety Talks can be found on the Staff Resource Centre at: <https://src.healthpei.ca/safety-talks>