Shoveling Snow Stats & Facts



FACTS

- 1. One way to help keep your balance when walking on slippery surfaces is to keep your hands out of your pockets.
- 2. Two things to avoid before shoveling snow are caffeine and nicotine, because they increase your heart rate and may cause your blood vessels to constrict, thereby increasing your risk for a heart attack.
- 3. Up to 10 percent of your body heat can be lost through your head, so it's important to wear a hat in cold outdoor working conditions. (LiveScience.com)
- 4. It takes five to seven days to become acclimatized to working outdoors in cold conditions.
- 5. Carbon monoxide accumulation in buildings is a major health hazard for workers in the winter months. Six pieces of equipment that can cause carbon monoxide poisoning if operated indoors without adequate ventilation are gasoline/propane powered forklifts, gas appliances and fireplaces, cars or trucks, welding equipment, gasoline-powered compressors and pumps, and fuel-powered heaters.
- 6. If you are driving on ice-covered roads, your stopping distances will be anywhere from three to 12 times longer than if you were braking on a dry road. (Health and Safety Ontario)

STATS

- Mostly men got injured in shoveling incidents about two-thirds of cases (67.5 percent).
- Older adults (55 years and older) accounted for about 22 percent of the (mostly) driveway mishaps.
- Children younger than 18 get hurt, too, making up about 15 percent of shoveling accidents.
- The most common injury? Strains, sprains, contusions, abrasions. These soft-tissue injuries (to muscles, tendons or ligaments) accounted for 54.7 percent of all injuries.
- People also tend to hurt their lower backs (hence the need to lift with your legs). Injuries to the lower back accounted for 34.3 percent of hospital admissions.
- In 20 percent of emergencies, people slipped and fell. In 15 percent, they were struck by a shovel. Cardiac-related ER visits, such as for heart attacks, accounted for 6.7 percent of cases.
- For snowfalls of more than eight inches, there was a 16% increase in hospital admissions compared to days with no snow.

- The deeper the snow, the more men died of heart attacks. A 34% increase was observed the day after an eight-inch snowfall, and higher rates were noted when even more snow fell.
- Duration of snowfall. The longer it snowed, the higher the rates of heart attack and related deaths among men.