

FIT/BITS

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FITNESS

Shovel Heart Smart

Cold temperatures combined with snow result in an increased risk for heart attacks, as much as a 30% increase for men aged 35-49. Shoveling snow is likely the reason. Shoveling snow can be as taxing as playing a singles tennis match or speed walking at 5 mph. Back injuries and muscle strains are common due to poor body mechanics and moving too much snow at once. Below are some suggestions to play it safe in the snow.



Ergonomic Shovel

- Know your risk level. You are at greater risk for heart issues from shoveling snow if you have already had a heart attack, if you have high blood pressure, if you have a history of heart disease, if you smoke or if you are not used to exercise.

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HEALTH IN THE NEWS

Calcium and Vitamin D Supplements: Round 2

Most people are familiar with recommendations for taking extra calcium to keep bones strong. Over the last year, there also have been many reports about the need for more vitamin D to improve bone health and potentially aid other health issues. In fact, sales of vitamin D supplements have skyrocketed recently, as have blood tests to evaluate serum levels of vitamin D.



A recently published, in-depth study of calcium and vitamin D supplements says these supplements are likely unnecessary and potentially harmful. The US and Canadian governments commissioned a report from the Institute of Medicine, an independent and nonprofit group, to study this issue.



Their results: adolescent girls may be the only group not getting enough dietary calcium, but excess calcium from supplements may contribute to risk for kidney stones and increase risk for heart disease. As for vitamin D, exposure to sunlight and dietary sources (like fortified milk and orange juice) provide enough vitamin D for most people. There is no proven benefit for increasing serum levels of vitamin D, yet there is an increased risk

for bone fractures and death from other diseases associated with high levels of vitamin D. With any increased risk and no proven benefit, more is not better.

The panel wrote that two studies resulted in the belief that higher serum levels of vitamin D were beneficial, but those studies were evaluated and found to be “inconsistent and/or conflicting.” They went on to say that blood levels of 20-30 nanograms per milliliter are sufficient for bone health, not the 30-50 nanograms per milliliter or even higher recommended by proponents of vitamin D supplementation. Such high levels are only attainable through supplementation.

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Single Leg Squats

Muscles Targeted: quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteals, core

Basic Single Leg Squat



START: Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Lift one leg off the floor, maintain balance. Keep your heel down squat down as if you are reaching for a chair behind you.

FINISH: Drive through your heel as you straighten back to start position.

Single Leg Wall Squat



START: Lean against a wall, place your feet about two feet from the wall. Lift one leg then slide down the wall until the thigh that is supporting your weight is parallel to the floor.

FINISH: Hold this position for 15 seconds to start on each leg.

Single Leg Ball Squat



START: Place a stability ball between a wall and your lower back. Lift one leg then lower your body down until the thigh that is supporting your body weight is parallel to the floor.

FINISH: Drive through your heel as you return to start position.

Single Leg Squat on Step



START: Stand on a step with one foot on the edge of the step and the other off the edge. Keep your heel down, sit back as if you are reaching for a chair. Squat down until your foot touches the floor or your supporting leg is parallel to the floor.

FINISH: Drive through your heel as you return to start position.

Ellen Histen and Shaun Carr, Perfectly Fit Corporate Services, Inc.

Wonderful Stuffed Potatoes



Ingredients:

4 medium baking potatoes
 ¾ cup low-fat (1%) cottage cheese
 ¼ cup low-fat (1%) milk
 2 Tbsp soft margarine
 1 tsp dill weed
 ¾ tsp herb seasoning
 4-6 drops hot pepper sauce
 2 tsp grated parmesan cheese

Instructions:

Prick potatoes with fork. Bake at 425° F for 60 minutes or until fork is easily inserted. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Carefully scoop out potato leaving about 1/2 inch of pulp inside shell. Mash pulp in large bowl. Mix in by hand remaining ingredients except parmesan cheese. Spoon mixture into potato shells. Sprinkle top with 1/4 tsp parmesan cheese. Place on baking sheet and return to oven. Bake 15-20 minutes or until tops are golden brown. (Serving Size ½ potato each – Yield 8 servings)

*Nutrition Information: Total Calories: 113,
 Fat: 3g, Saturated Fat: >1g, Cholesterol: 1mg,
 Sodium: 136*

Reprinted From: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/syab/lwspotato.htm>

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“Health is a relationship between you and your body.”

–Terry Guillemets

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Check with your doctor if you are not sure about your status.

- Dress appropriately for the weather. Wear waterproof, slip-proof boots, gloves and a hat to protect your extremities. Wear layers so that you can adjust your clothing as your body generates heat during shoveling. Be aware of signs of hypothermia: symptoms include shivering, disorientation, drowsiness and lack of coordination. Hypothermia can occur quickly in cold weather, especially with a moderate to strong wind. Also, cold temperatures will cause blood vessels to constrict, limiting blood flow and possibly exacerbating any heart problems.
- Shovel often as the snow comes down. It's much easier to remove two inches accumulation than five or more inches at the end of the snowfall.
- Think of shoveling as exercise and warm up by marching or jogging in place for a few minutes before you start.
- Don't be fooled into thinking that a big shovel will save you time. A smaller shovel will hold a more manageable amount of snow and will be safer to use.
- Push the snow to the side instead of lifting it. A full shovel of snow may weigh as much as 16 lbs! Multiply that by the number of shovels to clear your property to get an idea of how strenuous the job really is. Try a curved, ergonomically designed shovel to make lifting or pushing snow easier on the body. A snow scoop is designed specifically to push the snow.
- If there is no room to push the snow away, walk the snow to where you can dump it safely without twisting your body.
- Protect your back by bending your knees and lifting with your legs, not your back. Think of the movement as a squat, keeping the back straight and spine neutral. Never bend at the waist to move the snow!



- Avoid twisting the torso to throw the snow to the side. Better to alternate shoveling at an angle to dispose of the snow straight on. Be sure that no ice is

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Your body cannot store calcium (except in the bones), so you need it in your diet. Current guidelines recommend the following for daily calcium intake: 1000 mg for children 4-8; women and men 19-50; 1200 mg for children 9-18, women over 50 and men over 70. Recommendations for vitamin D are a little more difficult because the body can store it. Many physicians now test for blood levels of vitamin D and will recommend a supplement if the level is under 20-30 ng per milliliter. In general, a daily supplement of 1000 units is considered safe although probably unnecessary.

The panel hopes that the public will use more caution with calcium and vitamin D supplementation. This recommendation indicates once again that the safest way to care for yourself is to eat a healthy, varied diet and skip the supplements. Remember, many of the foods you eat regularly are fortified with calcium and vitamin D. However, you may wish to discuss your personal situation with your physician before making any changes.



Nancy Tashman, Perfectly Fit Corporate Services, Inc.

Source: Kolata, Gina. "Report Questions Need for 2 Diet Supplements." 29 November 2010. www.nytimes.com/2010/11/30/health/30vitamin.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

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Chicken Quesadillas with Red and Green Salsa



Ingredients for Salsa:

- 4 medium tomatoes, rinsed and diced (about 2 C)
- ½ C red onion, diced
- 1 medium Jalapeno chili pepper, rinsed and split lengthwise. Remove seeds and white membrane, and mince (about 2 Tbsp); for less spice, use green bell pepper
- 2 Tbsp lime juice (or about 4 limes)
- 2 Tbsp fresh cilantro, rinsed, dried, and chopped (or 2 tsp dried coriander)
- 1 tsp ground cumin

Ingredients for Quesadillas:

- 12 oz boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
- 4 (10-inch) whole-wheat tortillas
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp chili sauce
- 2 oz pepper jack cheese, shredded (about ½ C)
- 1 Tbsp pine nuts, toasted (optional)
- Cooking spray

Directions:

Preheat oven broiler on high temperature, with the rack three inches from heat source. For salsa, combine all ingredients and toss well. Chill in refrigerator for at least 15 minutes. Salsa can be made up to one day in advance and refrigerated. Cut chicken into thin strips, and place them on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Broil for 8–10 minutes. To assemble the quesadillas, place four whole-wheat tortillas on the countertop or table. Top each with one-quarter of the sliced cooked chicken, salt, chili sauce, cheese, and pine nuts (optional). Fold tortillas in half to close, and carefully transfer to a baking sheet lined with parchment or wax paper. Bake quesadillas at 350 °F for 5–10 minutes or until the cheese is melted. Serve one quesadilla with ½ cup salsa on the side.

One Serving 1 quesadilla, ½ C salsa – Yields 4 servings

Calories: 339, Total Fat: 11g, Saturated Fat: 3g, Cholesterol: 62mg, Sodium: 453mg, Fiber: 4g, Protein: 26g, Carbohydrate: 32g, Potassium 454mg

Reprinted From: <http://hp2010.nhlbi.nih.gov/healthyeating/recipe/detail.aspx?cId=2&rId=13>

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lurking beneath the snow.

- If ice is present, clear a small amount of snow within your reach and salt the area. When the ice melts, move on to the next area, repeating the process until your property is cleared. A pair of slip-on ice spikes for your shoes may be the best choice.
- Take a break and rest every ten minutes or so if you need it.
- Give your kids or local teens a chance to earn some cash and let them do the job for you.
- Know the symptoms of a heart attack and seek immediate medical attention if you start to experience difficulty: shortness of breath, chest pain, pain radiating down the arm, nausea, dizziness or fainting. Symptoms often differ for women and include unusual fatigue, weakness, upper back pain or feeling of indigestion in addition to possible shortness of breath or chest discomfort.
- Stay in shape during the year to have the strength and stamina to safely shovel snow.

If you use a snow blower, never insert your hands or fingers into the machine to clear a clog. Every year, common injuries include loss of fingers and even hands from snow blower accidents.

This winter, be smart about removing snow. Take proper precautions, don't overdo it and hope for Spring!

Nancy Tashman, Perfectly Fit Corporate Services, Inc.

Sources:

www.cnn.com

http://articles.cnn.com/2010-02-10/health/snow_shoveling.back.heart_1_shoveling-related-snow-acute-injuries/3?_s=PM:HEALTH

Gardner, Amanda. "Shoveling Snow? How to Protect Your Back (and Your Heart)". 10 February 2010. www.health.com.