Winter Well-Being: Safe Snow Shoveling

There are many health risks that can be involved with snow removal including back injuries and heart problems. Before you pick up your shovel this winter, please consider the following tips for injury prevention:

Warm-up: Snow shoveling is an aerobic activity that can be vigorous. Cold and tight muscles can increase risk for sprains and strains. Perform some light exercises to warm up your muscles before picking up a shovel.

Show off your snow gear: Wear layered water-repellant clothing along with warm socks, appropriate head covering and gloves.

Choose the right shovel: Pick a shovel that is not too heavy or long. A curved handle helps to keep your back straight.

Push when possible, don’t lift: Pushing puts less pressure on the spine. When lifting, fill the shovel only to a safe and easily manageable amount.

Squat, don’t bend: Keep your legs apart, knees bent, and back straight. Scoop small amounts of snow to avoid the shovel being too heavy. Walk to where you will dump the snow, and never throw it over your shoulder.

Take breaks: Use this time to stretch out your muscles. Be aware of how your body feels. It is important to take your time as shoveling can increase your heart rate and blood pressure.
The Division of Education hosted a “Fitness Carnival” with various activities for colleagues including Tabata, Hula Hooping, and healthy snacks/drinks!

Pictured: Christine A Hricak, Laura Harstine, and Shaneka Storey

**Tip!**

Positive self-talk helps to calm you down and control stress by turning negative thoughts into positive ones. Try practicing self-talk statements every day whether on your way to work, at your desk, or walking down the hall. Turn “Everything is going wrong” into “I can handle things if I take one step at a time.”

**Two Bean Chili**

Warm up this winter with this high-fiber option.

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1/2 can low-sodium kidney beans (drained, about 8 ounces)
- 1/2 can low-sodium vegetarian beans (about 8 ounces)
- 1/2 cup onion (diced)
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium tomato juice
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

**Directions**

1. In a medium-size pot, brown ground beef over medium to high heat for 8 to 10 minutes. Drain fat.
2. Add kidney beans, vegetarian beans, onions, chili powder, tomato juice, and pepper.
3. Cook over low heat for about 40 minutes. Serve hot.

**Serves 4**

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<th>Serving Size (1 cup)</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Total Fat</th>
<th>Sat Fat</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium 284mg</td>
<td>275</td>
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<td>3.6g</td>
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<td>Protein 18g</td>
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**Source:** A Harvest of Recipes with USDA Foods, United States Department of Agriculture