Why snow shoveling can be such a killer

QUESTION: Why is snow shoveling considered particlarly dangerous for individuals with a history of or at high risk for heart disease? Can the potential dangers be reduced?

side from the simple hazards of frostbite and

Aside from the simple hazards of frostbite and low back strains and sprains, snow shoveling can be deadly. During the cold winter months, news stories like the following are not uncommon.

"Nine men from the county collapsed and died vesterday while clearing snow near their homes. The deaths brought to 13 the number of weather-related fatalities since frigid air and heavy snow slashed into northern Ohlo Tuesday."

The association between snow showeling and heart attacks or sudden death is not coincidental. Snow shoveling represents an extremely strenuous activity requiring seven to nine times the resting energy requirements for loads weighing between 12 and 14 pounds.

For the person who is not physcially fit and unac-customed to strenuous activity, these levels of en-ergy expenditure may require maximal or supra-maximal efforts.

THE STRAIN of snow shoveling is further aggravated by numerous facts. Among them are the reduced mechanical efficiency associated with upper extremity efforts, superimposed isometric (static) exercise, breath holding, and the inhalation of or exposre to cold air.

These factors, singly and collectively, create a disproportionate heart rate and blood pressure response to effort, drastically increasing the demands of the heart for blood and oxygen.

In contrast to isotonic or rhythmic exercise, isometric straining, often in combination with breath holding, increases resistance to blood flow and restricts the amount of blood returned to the heart. Finally, inhaling cold air may result in a reflex

spasm or a temporary narrowing of the heart's own blood vessels (coronary arteries). In the presence of an already narrowed coronary circulation, these manifestations may lead to ischemia (lack of oxygen to the heart muscle), perhaps with chest pain or irregular and possibly dangerous heart rhythm disturbances.

SEVERAL GENERAL and specific recommen-

Elderly individuals or those with a history of heart disease simply should not shovel snow. Get someone to do it for you.
 The older you are, particularly over the age of 40, the more you should pace yourself. Adopt an interval or work-rest approach.
 Sudden strenuous exertion may result in excessive strain or the heart. When we have income.

sive strain on the heart. Warm-up by beginning to exercise gradually. It may be desirable to warm up

indoors in some instances.

indoors in some instances.

4. Lift small loads more often, rather than large, heavy loads.

5. Use a short shovel with a small scoop.

6. Wear a cold weather mask or scarf to avoid face and neck exposure to cold air, in inhaling it.

7. Avoid eating large meals, or coffee, tea, or collas — before or after shoveling.

8. Abstain from alcohol or tobacco before and after shoveling.

8. Abstain from alcohol or tobacco before and af-ter shoveling.

9. Place this label on your home shovel: WARN-ING: USE OF THIS INSTRUMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH.

The columnist, a PhD, is co-director of cardi-ac rehabilitation at Sinai Hospital and assist-ant professor of physiology at Wayne State University, Questions of general interest may be sent to him in care of this newspaper.

House limits candidates' spending, credit

Here's how area U.S.Congress mem-bers were recorded on major roll call votes Oct. 11 through Oct. 17.

HOUSE

HOUSE

SPECIAL-INTEREST MONEY: By a 217 to 189 vote the House adopted an amendment limiting the campaign contributions a limiting the campaign contributions a limiting the campaign contributions are service from 1990 and service from 1990 and the service from 1990 and 1990 and

Rep. Frank Thompson, D-N.J., a sup-porter, said that "left unrestricted, PAC money will become a predomi-nant force in the democratic process,

which, in effect, would render the pro-cess undemocratic." Rep. Mendel Davis, D-S.C., an oppo-

nep. mendel Davis, D-S.C., an opponent, said the amendment wrongfully attacks "constitutionally protected activity, such as free spending by individuals and groups to promote and support their own candidacies or views..."

FUND-RAISING: By a vote of 298 to 114, the House adopted an amendment restricting the credit a candidate for a House seat can receive. The vote came during debate on special interest money (see previous vote.) The amendment requires candidates to pay cash for direct-mail fund-raising services. Delayed payment is the equivalent of receiving a campaign contribution, according to the amendment.

Ren. Frank Thompson D.N. I. the

Rep. Frank Thompson, D-N.J., the sponsor, said his amendment was in keeping with the bill's overall purpose

roll call

report of limiting special-interest contribu-

ions.
Rep. Bill Frenze, R-Minn., an opponet, said the amendment would pri-marily benefit the AFL-CIO, Common Cause, and "the incumbent members of the House who would like to have as little challenge as possible." Members voting "yea" favord the amendment

amendment.
Pursell, Bonior, Ford, Brodhead and
Blanchard voted "yea."
Broomfield, voted "nay."

OIL PRICES: By a vote of 135 to 257, the House refused to reimpose price controls on the U.S. crude oil from al-

controls on the U.S. crude oil from al-ready-discovered wells.

In June President Carter began the gradual removal of price controls in an attempt to increase domestic oil pro-duction and cut consumption. The at-tempt to resume controls appeared as an amendment to a department of En-ergy Bill (HR3000) that was headed for

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final passage and to the Senate.

Rep. Toby Moffett, D-Conn., sponsor of the anmendment, said government regulation "is admittedly cumbersome in some respects, but it gives a some representation protection to consumers."

Rep. Clarence Brown, Rohio, an opponent, said shortages and price increases would result if Congress "subsidies the import of expensive foreign oil by holding domestic producers' prices down."

Members voting "nay" favored re-moving price controls from domestic

oil.
Pursell and Broomfield voted "nay."
Ford, Brodhead and Blanchard voted

"yea." Bonior did not vote.

PAY RAISE: The Senate voted, 43 to 42, in favor of permiting a 5.5 percent cest-of-living pay raise for congressmen. After the House concurred, pay for senators and House members was increased to \$60,653. This vote killed an amendment to block the raise which was added onto a funding bill which included money for federally-subsidized abortions. Accord-

to an interior oepariment appropria.

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., the sponsor, said "synthetic fuel production is ore. said "synthetic fuel production is reliance on imported oil. S. is to cut its reliance on imported oil. Opponents thought the price tag too high or disliked the procedure of appropriating money before legislation specifically authorizing a synthetic tuels program had been passed. Sen. William Armstrong, R-Colo, objected to buying a "\$20 billion pig in a poke." Senators 'voting "yea" favored the

ing to congressional observers, because the bill was entwined with other issues, it was less than a clear-cut expression of sentiment on the raise. Senators voting "nay" wanted to block the pay raise. Sen. Donald Riegle, Democrat, voted "yea."

Sen. Carl Levin, Democrat, voted "yea."

1 HERMAN TALMADGE: The Senate voted, 81 to 15, to "denounce" Sen. HERMAN TALMADGE: The Senate vo tion adopted by this vote stated, in Jart, that some \$43,435 in official expense money had been wrongfully claimed in Talmadge's name. This marked the first Senate discipline of one of its members since the 1957 censure of Sen. Thoms Dodd, D-Conn., for outsileal conduct.

Sen. Harrison Schmitt, R-NM., a supporter, said, "the words gross neglect, reprehensible, dishonor, disrepute, and denounced used in the resolution as reflecting the (Ethics) committee's judgment of Sen. Talmadge should be interpreted in their literal as well as their historical meaning."

Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., an opponent, said it is "only fair" to note that Talmadge's chief accuser, Daniel Michew, "pleaded guilty to a federal offense of fling false expense account vouchers and admitted before the Ethics Committee that he lied about a number of matters."



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