

Helpful Tips to Avoid Over Doing Spring Cleaning

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Well, spring is here and some of you are probably getting that urge to do your spring cleaning. Here are some helpful tips to avoid any unneeded injuries while cleaning after a long, but not too terribly bad, winter:

- When working outside, wear shoes with good non-slip soles to prevent unwanted falls on uneven or wet surfaces.
- Spend a short amount of time on several activities rather than trying to tackle one longer repetitive or grueling task. For example: vacuum or dust one room and move onto another cleaning chore rather than trying to vacuum the entire house at once.
- Alter the position in which you must stand or sit often while completing a task. If you have just spent an hour hunched over scrubbing a bathtub, make your next task one that will allow you to stand or sit up straight to give your back a rest.
- Many cleaning jobs require the use of chemicals or cleansers. When using chemicals make sure you have proper ventilation. Use gloves and protective clothing to avoid burning your skin. Always clean up spills immediately to avoid falls. Store all chemicals where they will be out of reach for pets and children. Have the number for poison control accessible in the event of accidental ingestion of chemicals.
- If your cleaning will require the use of a ladder, make sure it is set up on a solid and level surface. Always check ladder for loose or missing screws or rungs prior to use. Always move the ladder closer to an object rather than trying to reach while on the ladder. Do not use ladder rungs as a seat to rest while working. Do not perform tasks on a ladder if you have balance problems or are taking medications that may cause balance problems.
- Follow basic lifting principles when reorganizing that storage closet or hauling away junk or debris. Bend at your knees and not your back. Tighten your stomach and lift with your legs. Keep the object close to your body. Avoid twisting and turning your back, take small steps to turn. Get help when lifting heavy items.
- Warm-up and stretch prior to cleaning activities. It is not something one might normally think about prior to cleaning, but warming up cold muscles and stretching can help eliminate or minimize muscle soreness and prevent injuries while doing your spring cleaning. If you do end up with soreness or pain following a marathon cleaning session and it lasts longer than 48 hours without decreasing in intensity you should seek advice from your physician or physical therapist.