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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: March 15, 2009

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Avoid Spring Cleaning Spills

MOA offers tips to prevent injuries throughout the home this spring

Peterborough, NH

As the weather becomes warmer, people start preparing their homes and yards for the spring and summer seasons. Projects such as yard work, cleaning and painting become priorities on the to-do list. The statistics show that thousands of orthopaedic injuries occur each year as a result of mishaps around the house and is one of the reasons why Monadnock Orthopaedic Associates urges people to take the proper safety precautions to reduce the number of spring cleaning-related accidents.

- More than 532,000 [ladder injuries](#), nearly 119,000 garden tool-related injuries and approximately 226,000 [lawn mowing](#) injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms, doctors' offices and clinics in 2007, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"Many spring cleaning injuries occur when people rush or do not follow the proper safety precautions," explained W. Bradley White, M.D., FAAOS of Monadnock Orthopaedic Associates. "Because most injuries are preventable, orthopaedic surgeons stress using the appropriate equipment for each project and that people take their time when cleaning in order to minimize these seasonal accidents."

Because orthopaedic surgeons not only treat, but try to prevent injuries of the bones, joints and muscles, MOA recommends the following spring cleaning tips:

- Proper techniques for lifting, carrying and bending should be part of any spring cleaning project:
 - Separate your feet, shoulder-width apart, keep your back upright and bend at the knees while tightening the stomach muscles.
 - Lift with your leg muscles as you stand up; don't try to lift any object by yourself if it is too heavy or an awkward shape.
- Use a step stool instead of furniture – such as a couch or dining room chair – when dusting hard to reach areas.
- Ladders used for chores – such as washing windows, painting, cleaning gutters and trimming trees – should be placed on a firm, level surface. Never place a ladder on ground or flooring that is uneven, soft or wet.

- Over-reaching or leaning too far to one side when working on a ladder can also make you lose your balance and fall. Your bellybutton should not go beyond the sides of the ladder.
- When gardening, avoid prolonged repetitive motions during activities such as digging, planting trimming and pruning. It is also important to wear gloves to reduce blistering and protect the skin.
- Read product labels for proper use and wear protective clothing and gloves when using chemicals for gardening or cleaning. Store all chemicals – at the appropriate temperature, which is usually indicated on the package – in a place that is out of reach of both children and pets.
- Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration. If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath or other signs of a heart attack, seek emergency care, such as by calling 9-1-1.

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