

## Treadmill Desk Usage

Treadmill like standing desks are gaining in popularity in the workplace. These desks are a combination treadmill and desk surface that allow the user to walk on a treadmill while performing office tasks. The idea behind a treadmill desk is that it allows the user to obtain exercise by walking at a slow pace while still being productive at work. While this sounds promising, there are several drawbacks to these types of desks.

### Cost

One of the biggest drawbacks is the cost of such equipment, which can range from \$800 to \$4000 depending on type the of desk and the manufacturer. Besides the initial cost, there also tends to be a loss in productivity while employees get used to the desks. This process can take several months and some employees find that they do not care for these types of desks and choose to go back to a standard work station, which may result in added costs.

### Injury

There are no ADA compliance rules that make a treadmill desk a necessary accommodation. In fact, treadmill desks can result in injuries, especially during the initial adjustment phase, when people are multitasking, something that research shows people generally do not do well. Also, because the use of a treadmill during working hours is outside of the

scope of most types of office jobs, these injuries may not be covered under your county's workers' compensation insurance.

### Work Environment

Studies have shown that treadmill desks increase daily physical activities for employees. However, these health benefits may be outweighed by the distractions these desks cause in an office environment. Noise from the motor and from footfalls on the treadmill typically range between 42 and 57 decibels even at a walking pace. For employees whose job requires them to be on the phone, this added noise can be distracting.

### What This Means for Counties

Treadmill desk use poses increased risk for counties and injuries resulting from their use may not be covered under worker's compensation insurance. For these reasons, CTSI does not recommend their use in county facilities. For more information, please contact CTSI at 303 861 0507.

