Ergonomics: Treadmill workstations, stability balls and other fads
Treadmill desks **are not** recommended for use in the workplace. Current research indicates that the use of a treadmill desk results in:

- Reduction in worker productivity
  - Deterioration of typing ability
  - Reduction in manual dexterity
- Possible reduction of cognitive ability to perform work while walking
- Ineffective replacement for regular vigorous exercise
- Not a cost effective means to improve workplace wellness
Ball chairs

Exercise balls and ball chairs are NOT recommended as permanent replacements for a good ergonomic office chair.

- Exercise balls have many ergonomic deficiencies including:
  - Not height adjustable
  - No lumbar support
  - Lack of arm rests
  - Difficult to use keyboard without assuming an awkward reach
  - Sitting in a chair in a reclined position significantly reduces disc pressure in the back, but this position cannot be maintained while sitting on an exercise ball.

Exercise balls and ball chairs can be used for temporary seating, possibly to help with some core strengthening.
Anti-gravity chairs

While there can be no denying the comfort level of many of the zero-gravity chairs being sold today, this class of chairs cannot be recommended for use in a typical office setting.

- Very expensive
- Difficult to work in
- Impractical
The use of back belts is not recommended for use as a means to prevent lower back injuries in the workplace.

Research indicates that the use of back belts has not been seen to be effective in preventing back pain at work (van Poppel et al., 1997; Källestål et al., 2004; Silverstein and Clark, 2004).

OSHA and NIOSH do not recommend the mandatory use of back belts in the workplace. Both organizations recommend that engineering controls be used to reduce the hazards of lifting. Secondly, training in identifying lifting hazards and safe lifting techniques should improve program effectiveness.
If you would like an ergonomic assessment of your work area contact:

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