



## **Tech Tips Cleaning Treadmills**

It is clear that the machines that always seem to get the most use in commercial clubs and gyms are the cardio equipment. Among cardio equipment, treadmills are the winners for day in and day out punishment. With the amount of use they get and the pounding they have to absorb, the best way to maximize uptime is to establish a routine maintenance program. Most preventive maintenance is easy to do and a little bit of care in this area will go a long way in extending the life of your treadmills.

Basic, routine maintenance consists of the same principles you'd use in your household - clean up any spills, dust, wash your hands and vacuum your room.

Users should be instructed to wipe up any liquid spills immediately and use a cloth to wipe the equipment down after each workout, to remove remaining perspiration from the handrails or painted areas.

Club staff should clean the equipment at least once a week but first it is important to unplug the treadmill to avoid any electrical problems while doing so. Next wipe the treadmill with a clean, damp cloth containing a mild cleaning agent - such as a water and dish soap solution. Apply the cleaner to the cloth first - not directly to the treadmill. Spray it on the cloth or wring the cloth so as not to drip the cleaning solution on the console. Use this to clean perspiration or dirt off the console and any painted surfaces.

Vacuum any dust or dirt that might accumulate under or around the treadmill area - as dirt and dust are the enemy of any treadmill deck and belt. They'll act to gouge the deck surface and shorten the wear of the running belt if given half a chance. Users should not wear their street shoes on the treadmill but their workout shoes instead, so as not to track dirt and particulates onto the equipment. You can raise the treadmill elevation to the maximum level and then unplug the treadmill to gain some vacuuming room underneath. A vacuum attachment or hand vacuum comes in handy here. You can use a dry cloth to dust any areas you can't reach with the vacuum cleaner.

Hand grips and contact heart rates take a beating from all kinds of contaminants, body oils, perspiration, hand lotions, etc. These can reduce the sensitivity of the heart rate sensors and interfere with the heart rate signal, so it is very important to keep these areas clean. Users should be instructed to have clean hands when using the contact heart rate. Regardless of how well people are instructed, these areas will receive their share of hand lotion and body oils and will need to be addressed with a cleaning

solution containing rubbing alcohol to keep things working well. The grips are the only area of the treadmill that you should use alcohol on. But it really helps to cut through the microscopic and sometimes more obvious grime that can build up here.

The deck and belt surfaces themselves can and should be wiped with a clean, dry cloth or towel to minimize the effect of friction that dirt particles can create between the running deck and the belt as mentioned above. Both the deck and belt surfaces should be checked periodically as part of your maintenance for any excessive wear. Make sure the belt shows no signs of tears or fraying. The above procedures should only be undertaken with the treadmill unplugged of course.

Finally just like a large rubber band the running belt can loosen and stretch a bit over time causing a slipping sensation, if not adjusted and tightened when needed. A 3/4" socket wrench is the best tool to use. If slippage is reported, turn each of the two large bolts at the rear of the treadmill 1/2 turn clockwise. Start the treadmill and walk on the belt to see if there is still a slipping sensation - if so repeat the procedure to tighten the bolts 1/2 turn at a time and try again. A few tries at this should address any slippage issues.

Familiarize yourself with the maintenance section of your owner's manual as it goes into these and other procedures in more detail. These few paragraphs are meant to act as a reminder that it makes good sense and good cents to keep your treadmills maintained on a routine basis. Should you have any questions regarding fitness equipment maintenance procedures or setting up a routine maintenance program consult your manual and/or call Cybex Service for additional advice and assistance. That's what we're here for - to serve you!