



## hartford help

### Stairway to Better Health

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a study to find out whether making stairs aesthetically more appealing would increase the number of employees who opted for the stairs versus the elevator.

Researchers conducted a four-stage passive intervention, implemented over a more than three-year period,, that included painting and carpeting, framed artwork, motivational signs, and music. Infrared beams were used to track the number of stair users. "StairWELL to Better Health," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (May 13, 2009).

The low-cost plan worked and increased the number of employees who opted to climb the stairs.

#### *Commentary*

Taking the stairs is one way to engage in more physical activity. At work, employees are often presented with a choice between taking the stairs and taking an elevator or escalator. Choosing the stairs instead of the elevator is a simple way for employees to add physical activity to their day.

Using the stairs requires little additional time, no wardrobe change, and few additional costs because building codes require stairs.

One of the reasons employees may not use the stairs at work is because they perceive them as unattractive and/or unsafe. Evaluate your work stairs to see if they need aesthetic or safety improvements to increase usage.

Stairs, like walking, provide a low-impact cardiovascular workout and can help employees lose weight, tone their muscles and improve their overall health.

The [StairWELL](#) section of the CDC's website addresses the following topics:

- Stairwell Appearance
- Motivational Signs
- Installing Music
- Other Ideas to Consider
- Tracking Stair Usage
- Project Checklist
- Related Resources

This informational piece is part of "News to Use" published on May 19, 2009.

May 19, 2009

Copyright 2006, Hartford Help. All Rights Reserved. Please, read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#).