

# A machine considered punishment now a \$1.4B industry

By Mike Plunkett, New York Times

As the weather turns colder, Jen Forman will do what she's always done to get her runs in: She'll go to her treadmill in her home, press start and run until she's done.

And she will hate every moment of it.

"I will continue to press the speed button to get a treadmill workout done as quickly as possible," said Forman, 38, of Gaithersburg. "But I can't live without it, because if it's snowing outside or I have my kids at home, I can't leave and go for a run."

In its 2016 survey, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) found that more than 50 million Americans said they used a treadmill at least once in the previous year. Yet if the monotonous motion feels like torture, well, that shouldn't come as a surprise. The tread wheel, a variation of what we know as the modern treadmill, was used in the 1800s to keep British prisoners from idleness but more so for hard labor.

**Read the whole story**