



FACT SHEET NO. 25



Results from the 2002 Western Australian Adult Physical Activity Survey: Key Findings by Age

The Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce

In November 2002, the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce (PATF) undertook a state-wide survey to measure physical activity levels of Western Australian adults. This fact sheet presents major findings from this survey.

Sample

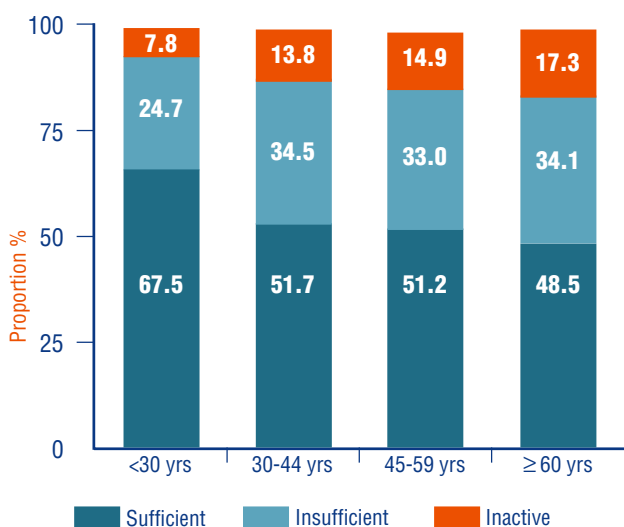
Of the total sample (n = 3,200) who completed the physical activity survey, 15.3% were <30 years, 30.4% were 30-44 years, 28.2% were 45-59 years and 25.8% were ≥60 years of age.

Levels of Physical Activity by Gender

Figure 1 presents the proportion of adults in each age group who were:

- **Sufficiently active** (≥150 minutes of moderate activity over 5 or more days or ≥60 minutes of vigorous activity per week);
- **Insufficiently active** (some physical activity but less than sufficient), and;
- **Inactive** (no physical activity).

Figure 1. Levels of Physical Activity by Age

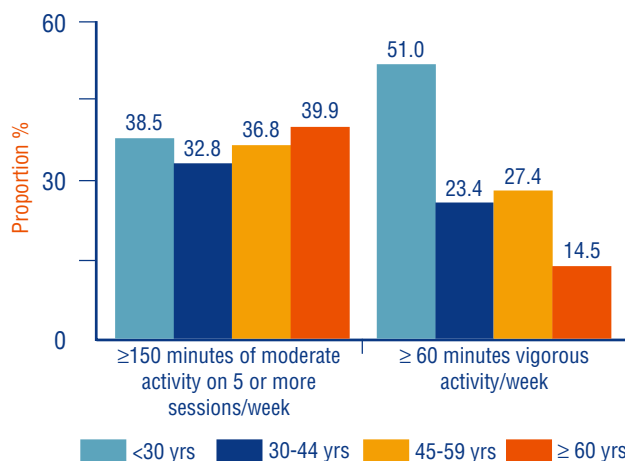


A lower proportion of adults <30 years were inactive and a higher proportion were sufficiently active to accrue health benefits compared to other age groups.

Participation in Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Intensity Physical Activity by Age

Figure 2 presents the proportion of adults in each age group participating in sufficient moderate (≥150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on 5 or more days per week) and vigorous (≥60 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week) physical activity.

Figure 2. Levels of Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity by Age

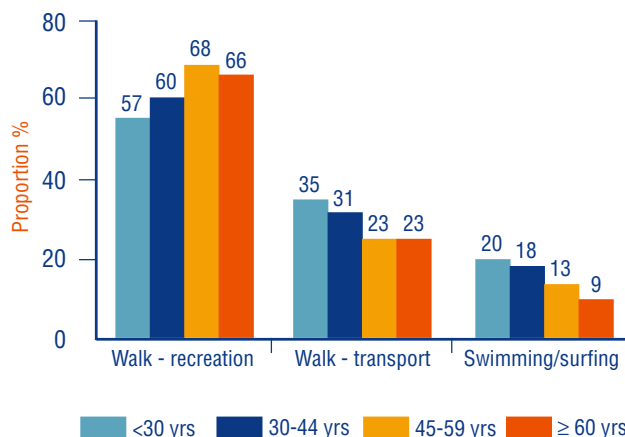


Similar percentages across all age groups reported participating in sufficient moderate physical activity, except those 30-44 years who reported they participated in less. Approximately one-half of adults <30 years participated in sufficient vigorous physical activity. This percentage decreased sharply in the 30-44 year age group and again in the ≥60 year age group.

Participation in Different Types of Physical Activity

Figure 3 presents the major types of physical activity participated in the past week by age group.

Figure 3. Types of Physical Activity



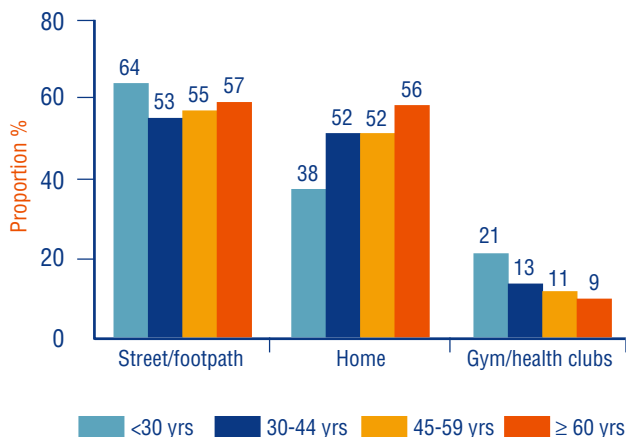
Walking for recreation was more popular among those aged 45-59 and ≥60 years. Walking for transport was more popular among those aged <30 and 30-44 years. The proportion of adults swimming/surfing declined with increasing age.



Facilities used for Participation in Physical Activity

Figure 4 presents major types of facilities used for physical activity in the past week by age group.

Figure 4. Facilities used for Physical Activity by age group



A higher proportion of adults <30 years used the street/footpath for physical activity in the past week compared to other age groups. Exercising at home was more popular among the older age groups. The use of a gym/health club was more popular among adults aged <30 years compared to other age groups.

Pedometer Results

On average, adults aged; <30 years performed 9,890 steps/day; 30-44 years performed 10,565 steps/day; 45-59 years performed 9,749 steps/day; and ≥ 60 years performed 8,122 steps/day.

Overweight and Obesity

Self-reported height and weight data were used to determine body mass indices (BMI) for each survey participant (weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared). The following categories were used to define weight¹:

- <18.50 underweight
- 18.50-24.99 healthy weight
- 25.00-29.99 overweight
- ≥ 30.00 obese

The prevalence for each of these BMI categories for each age group is presented in Figure 5 (underweight category not shown).

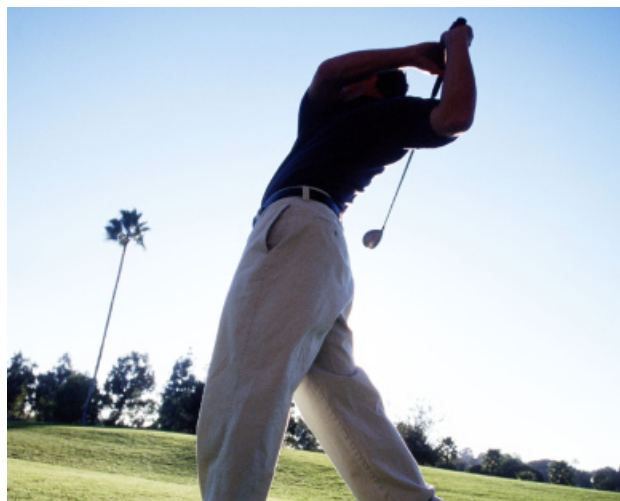
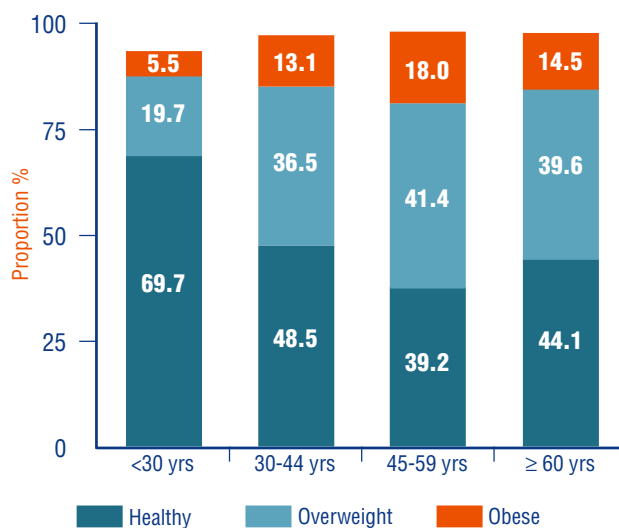


Figure 5. Body Mass Index by Age



A higher proportion of adults <30 years were in the healthy weight range (69.7%) and lower proportions were overweight (19.7%) and obese (5.5%) compared to all other age groups. Adults 45-59 years had the lowest proportion in the healthy weight range (39.2%) and the highest proportion in the overweight (41.4%) and obese (18.0%) categories.

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing levels of sufficient physical activity in Western Australia, as well as key findings from the 2002 Western Australian Adults Physical Activity Survey and Pedometer Study² can be found at the PATF website (www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au) or by contacting the PATF Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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Suggested Citation: McCormack, G., & Watt, S. (2003). Results from the 2002 Western Australian Adult Physical Activity Survey: Key Findings by Age (Fact Sheet No. 25). Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.



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¹ World Health Organisation (2001). Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic. WHO Technical Series: No. 894. Geneva: WHO; 2000.

² McCormack G, Milligan R, Giles-Corti B, & Clarkson J. (2003). Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2002. Results from the Adult Physical Activity Survey and Pedometer Study. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.