

FACT SHEET NO. 17

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF THE MIDWEST AND GASCOYNE REGIONS

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 for the Midwest and Gascoyne regions¹.

Midwest and Gascoyne Sample Demographics

The Midwest and Gascoyne regions have a combined estimated population of 31,543 (in 2001). From the Midwest and Gascoyne regions, 123 participants or 3.8% of the total sample (n = 3,200) completed the physical activity survey.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents from the Midwest and Gascoyne Regions

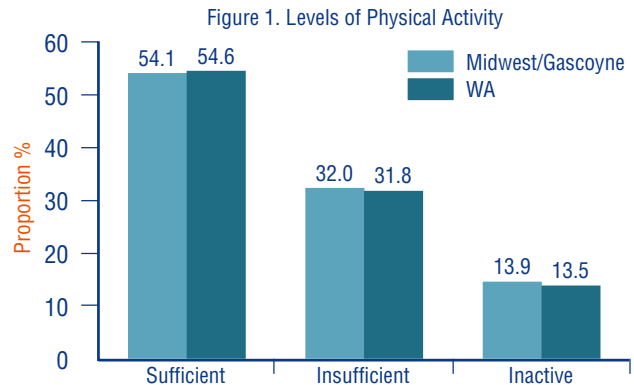
CHARACTERISTIC	%
Gender	
Male	42.3
Female	57.7
Age Group	
18 to 29 years	21.3
30 to 44 years	32.8
45 to 59 years	27.9
60 years or more	18.0
Education	
Less than TEE	44.7
TEE/diploma	40.7
University	14.6

(Note n = 123)

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity

Figure 1 presents the proportion of adults from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions who were:

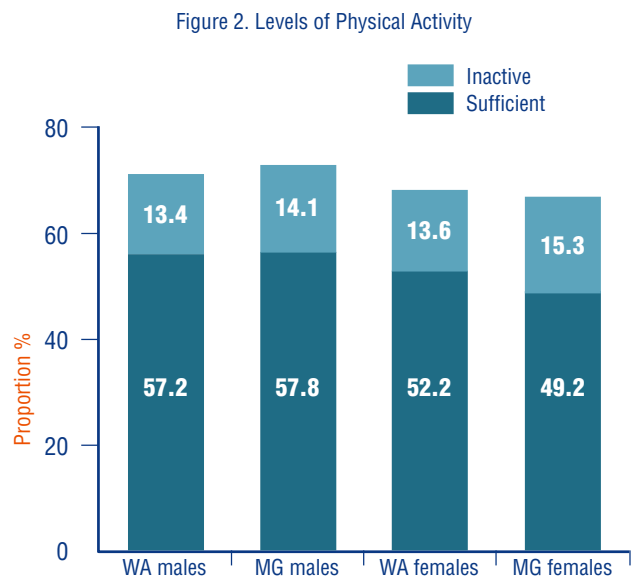
- **Sufficiently active** (≥ 150 minutes of moderate activity over 5 or more days or ≥ 60 minutes of vigorous activity per week);
- **Insufficiently active** (some physical activity but less than sufficient), and;
- **Inactive** (no physical activity).



The proportion of adults from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions participating in sufficient activity, insufficient activity and inactivity were similar to Western Australian adults overall.

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity by Gender

Figure 2 presents the proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne (MG) and Western Australian (WA) adults who were inactive and sufficiently active by gender.



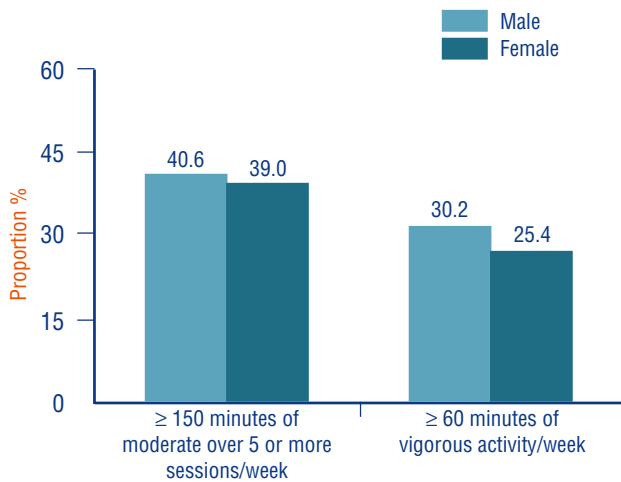
A lower proportion of females from the Midwest and Gascoyne participated in sufficient physical activity (49.2%) and a higher proportion were inactive (15.3%) compared to Western Australian females overall. The proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne males who were sufficiently active and inactive was similar to the overall figure for Western Australian males.



Participation in Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity by Gender

Figure 3 presents the proportion of adults from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions participating in sufficient moderate (≥ 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity over 5 or more days per week) and vigorous (≥ 60 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week) physical activity.

Figure 3. Levels of Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity



The proportion of males and females from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions participating in sufficient moderate physical activity was similar. However, a higher proportion of these regions males and females participated in sufficient moderate physical activity compared to Western Australian males (35.4%) and females (37.7%) overall. A lower proportion of males and a similar proportion of females from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions participated in sufficient vigorous physical activity compared to Western Australian males (37%) and females (25.8%) overall.

Other Physical Activity Facts for the Midwest and Gascoyne Regions (WA results in brackets)

- 56.6% (62%) walked for recreation or exercise, 16.4% (28%) walked for transport, and 2.5% (8%) cycled for recreation in the week before the survey.
- 42.1% (57%) used the streets or footpaths, and 5.6% (17%) used a public park or oval for physical activity in the week before the survey.
- 49.2% (49%) reported “not having enough time” as a barrier to being more active and 31.5% (34%) reported “to improve fitness” as a major reason for participating in physical activity.



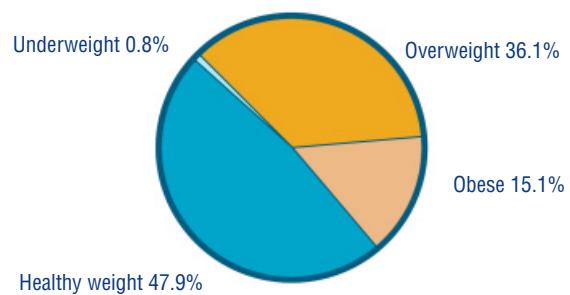
Overweight and Obesity

Self-reported height and weight data were used to determine the Body Mass Index (BMI) for each survey participant (weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared). The following BMI categories were used to define weight²:

- < 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 in the Midwest and Gascoyne regions is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Levels of BMI



A slightly lower proportion of adults from the Midwest and Gascoyne regions were in the healthy weight range (47.9%) and higher proportions were overweight (36.1%) and obese (15.1%) compared to the overall Western Australian adult population (healthy weight 49.8%, overweight 34.7% and obese 13%).

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing levels of sufficient physical activity in Western Australia, as well as key findings can be found in the recently published report, Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2002³. This report can be obtained from the PATF website (www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au) or by contacting the PATF Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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¹ As defined by the Department of Sport and Recreation, WA

² World Health Organisation (2001). Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic. WHO Technical Series: No. 894. Geneva: WHO; 2000.

³ 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.