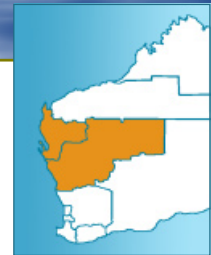




FACT SHEET NO. 5



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF THE MIDWEST AND GASCOYNE HEALTH REGION

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 about the levels of physical activity and body mass index for the Midwest and Gascoyne health regions¹.

Midwest and Gascoyne Sample Demographics

The Midwest and Gascoyne health regions cover an area of 606,110km² and have an estimated population of 60,714 people (in 2002). From the Midwest and Gascoyne health regions 124 participants or 3.9% of the total sample (n = 3,200) completed the physical activity survey.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents From the Midwest and Gascoyne Health Region

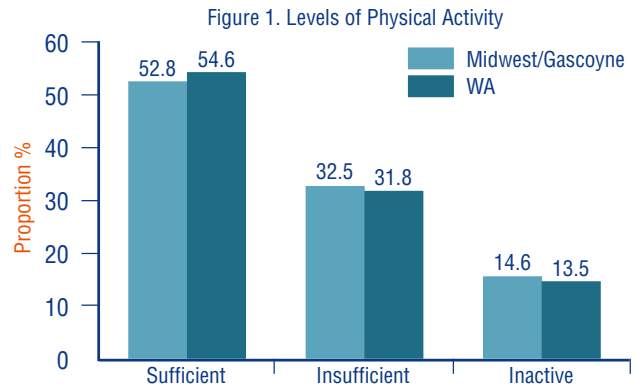
Characteristic	%
Gender	
Male	42.7
Female	57.3
Age Group	
18 to 29 years	21.1
30 to 44 years	33.3
45 to 59 years	27.6
60 years or more	17.9
Education	
Less than TEE	44.4
TEE/diploma	40.3
University	15.3

(Note n = 124)

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity

Figure 1 presents the proportions of adults from the Midwest and Gascoyne region 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 Midwest and Gascoyne adults who were sufficiently active was slightly less (52.8%) than Western Australian adults overall (54.6%). The proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne adults who were inactive was slightly higher (14.6%) than Western Australian adults overall (13.5%).

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity by Gender, Age, and Education

Table 2 presents the proportions of Midwest and Gascoyne adults who were insufficiently active (including those inactive) and sufficiently active by selected characteristics.

Table 2: Participation in Sufficient physical activity by age, gender, and education

Characteristic	Insufficient (%)		Sufficient (%)	
	MG ¹	WA ²	MG ¹	WA ²
Gender				
Male	42.9	42.8	57.1	57.2
Female	52.5	47.8	47.5	52.2
Age Group				
18 to 29 years	45.5	32.5	54.5	67.5
30 to 44 years	58.4	48.3	45.2	51.7
45 to 59 years	45.5	48.8	54.5	51.2
60 years +	38.5	51.5	61.5	48.5
Education				
Less than TEE	50.9	51.7	49.1	48.3
TEE/diploma	44.9	43.0	55.1	57.0
University	45.0	40.3	55.0	59.7

¹Midwest and Gascoyne; ² Western Australia

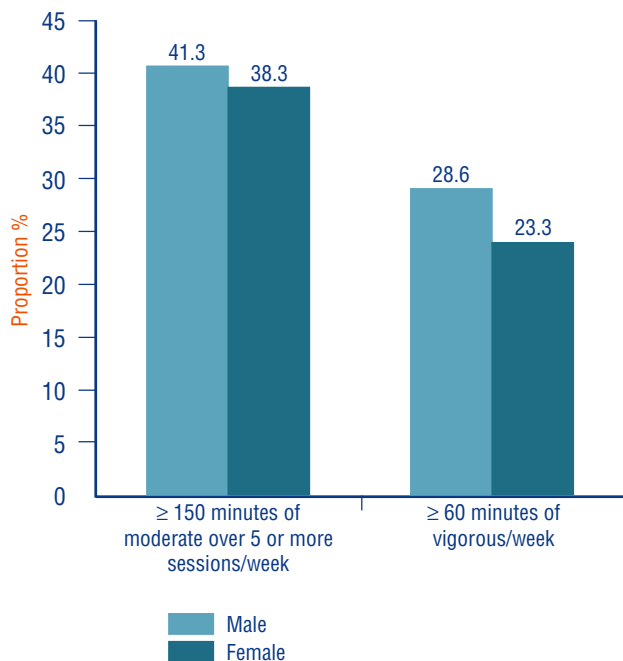
Compared to the Western Australian adult population, lower proportions of females, people aged 18-29 and 30-44 years, university educated, and healthy weight individuals from the Midwest and Gascoyne region participated in sufficient levels of physical activity.



Participation in Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous-Intensity Physical Activity by Gender

Figure 2 presents the proportions of Midwest and Gascoyne adults 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 2. Levels of Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity



A higher proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne males (41.3%) and a similar proportion of females (38.3%) participated in sufficient levels of moderate-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian adult males (35.4%) and females (37.7%) overall. A lower proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne males (28.6%) and females (23.3%) participated in sufficient levels of vigorous-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian adult males (37%) and females (25.8%) overall.

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

- 56.9% (62%) walked for recreation or exercise, 16.3% (28%) walked for transport, and 2.5% (8%) cycled for recreation in the week before the survey.
- 41.5% (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.
- 48.8% (49%) reported “not having enough time” as a barrier to being more active and 30.3% (34%) reported “to improve fitness” as a major reason for participating in physical activity.
- 82.1% (74%) were aware of the Department of Health’s “Find thirty, it’s not a big exercise” message.



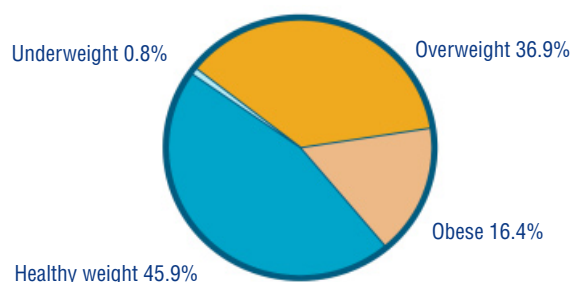
Overweight and Obesity

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 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 in the Midwest and Gascoyne is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Levels of BMI



A lower proportion of Midwest and Gascoyne adults were healthy weight (45.9%), and higher proportions were overweight (36.9%), and obese (16.4%) 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 2002². This report and other useful resources can be obtained from the following 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 Health, 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, G. (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.