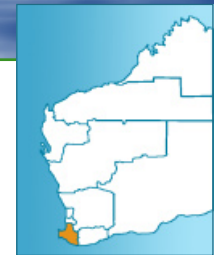


FACT SHEET NO. 3



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF THE SOUTH WEST 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 South West health region¹.

South West Sample Demographics

The South West health region covers an area of 23,970km² and has an estimated population of 133,940 people (in 2002). From the South West health region, 166 participants or 5.2% of the total sample (n = 3,200) completed the physical activity survey.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents From the South West Health Region

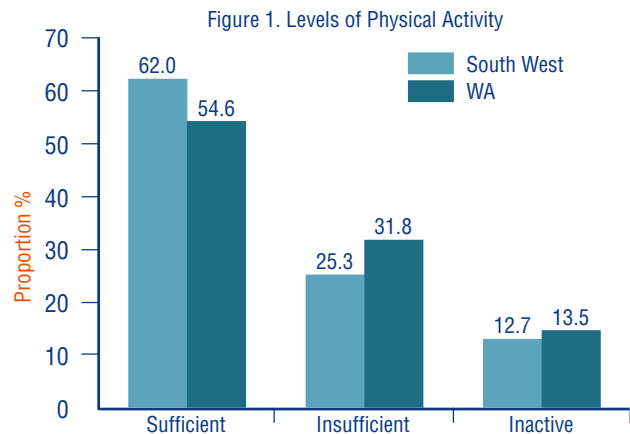
CHARACTERISTIC	%
Gender	
Male	44.6
Female	55.4
Age Group	
18 to 29 years	12.0
30 to 44 years	34.9
45 to 59 years	27.1
60 years or more	25.9
Education	
Less than TEE	49.4
TEE/diploma	33.1
University	17.5

(Note n = 166)

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity

Figure 1 presents the proportions of adults from the South West 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 South West adults who were sufficiently active was greater (62%) than Western Australian adults overall (54.6%). The proportion of South West adults who were inactive (12.7%) was similar to Western Australian adults overall (13.5%).

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

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

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

Characteristic	Insufficient (%)		Sufficient (%)	
	SW ¹	WA ²	SW ¹	WA ²
Gender				
Male	30.1	42.8	69.9	57.2
Female	45.8	47.8	54.2	52.2
Age Group				
18 to 29 years	17.9	32.5	82.1	67.5
30 to 44 years	38.2	48.3	61.8	51.7
45 to 59 years	42.6	48.8	57.4	51.2
60 years +	45.9	51.5	50.7	48.5
Education				
Less than TEE	42.3	51.7	57.7	48.3
TEE/diploma	33.9	43.0	66.1	57.0
University	36.7	40.3	63.3	59.7

¹South West; ² Western Australia

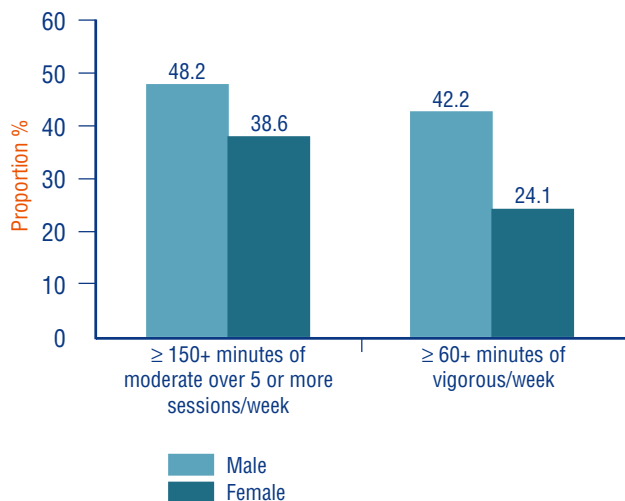
For the South West region the proportion of adults participating in sufficient levels of physical activity across all characteristics was higher than that observed for Western Australian adults overall.



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

Figure 2 presents the proportions of South West 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 South West males (48.2%) participated in sufficient levels of moderate-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian males overall (35.4%). A higher proportion of South West males (42.2%) participated in sufficient levels of vigorous-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian males overall (37%). Similar proportions of females from the South West participated in sufficient levels of moderate (38.6%) and vigorous-intensity (24.1%) physical activity compared to Western Australian females overall (37.7% and 25.8%, respectively).

Other Physical Activity Facts for the South West (WA results in brackets)

- 51.2% (62%) walked for recreation or exercise, 24.7% (28%) walked for transport, and 10.2% (8%) cycled for recreation in the week before the survey.
- 45% (57%) used the streets or footpaths, and 5.7% (17%) used a public park or oval for physical activity in the week before the survey.
- 47% (49%) reported “not having enough time” as a barrier to being more active and 32.3% (34%) reported “to improve fitness” as a major reason for participating in physical activity.
- 74.3% (74%) were aware of the Department of Health’s “Find thirty, it’s not a big exercise” message.



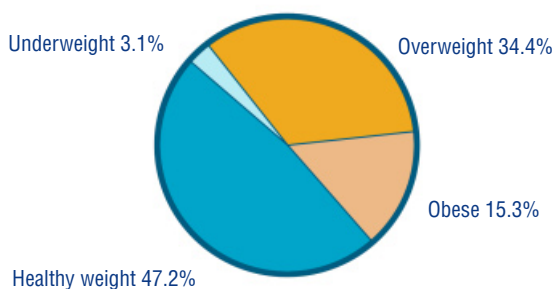
Overweight and Obesity

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 South West health region is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Levels of BMI



A lower proportion of South West adults were healthy weight (47.2%), a similar proportion of were overweight (34.4%), and a higher proportion were obese (15.3%) 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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Department of Health
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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.