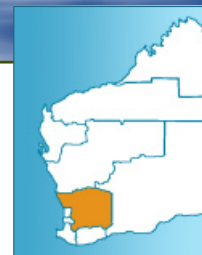




FACT SHEET NO. 2



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF THE WHEATBELT 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 Wheatbelt health region¹.

Wheatbelt Sample Demographics

The Wheatbelt health region covers an area of 154,862km² and has an estimated population of 54,261 people (in 2002). From the Wheatbelt health region, 150 participants or 4.7% of the total sample (n = 3,200) completed the physical activity survey.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents From the Wheatbelt Health Region

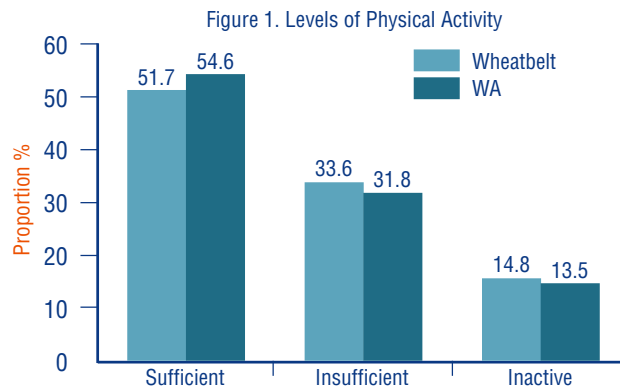
Characteristic	%
Gender	
Male	48.7
Female	51.3
Age Group	
18 to 29 years	6.0
30 to 44 years	32.2
45 to 59 years	27.5
60 years or more	34.2
Education	
Less than TEE	45.6
TEE/diploma	31.5
University	22.8

(Note n = 150)

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity

Figure 1 presents the proportions of adults from the Wheatbelt 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 Wheatbelt adults who were sufficiently active was less (51.7%) than Western Australian adults overall (54.6%). The proportion of Wheatbelt adults who were inactive was slightly higher (14.8%) than Western Australian adults overall (13.5%).

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

Table 2 presents the proportions of Wheatbelt 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 (%)	
	W ¹	WA ²	W ¹	WA ²
Gender				
Male	50.6	42.8	49.4	57.2
Female	45.8	47.8	54.2	52.2
Age Group				
18 to 29 years	23.8	32.5	76.2	67.5
30 to 44 years	45.8	48.3	54.2	51.7
45 to 59 years	48.9	48.8	51.1	51.2
60 years +	63.9	51.5	36.1	48.5
Education				
Less than TEE	58.3	51.7	41.7	48.3
TEE/diploma	38.2	43.0	61.8	57.0
University	48.6	40.3	51.4	59.7

¹Wheatbelt; ² Western Australia

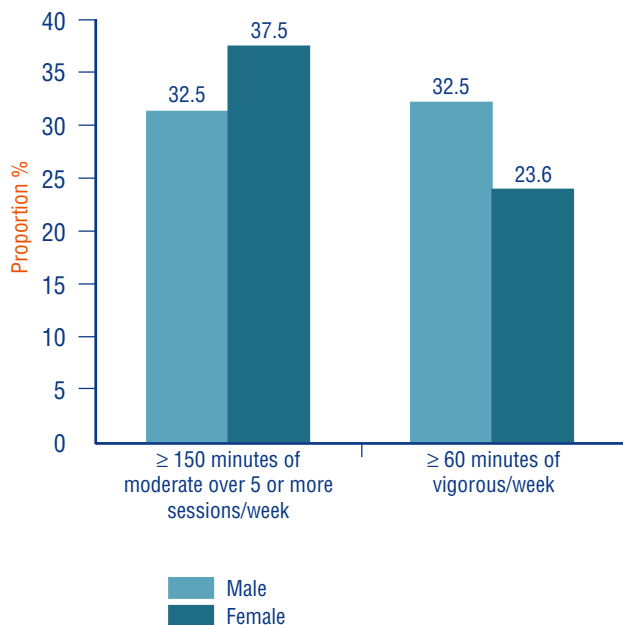
For the Wheatbelt region the proportion of adults participating in sufficient levels of physical activity was higher for females, 18-29 year olds, 30-44 year olds, and those with TEE/diploma education, compared to Western Australian adults overall.



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

Figure 2 presents the proportions of Wheatbelt 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 lower proportion of Wheatbelt males (32.5%) participated in sufficient levels of moderate-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian male adults overall (35.4%). A lower proportion of Wheatbelt males (32.5%) and females (23.6%) participated in sufficient levels of vigorous-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian males (37%) and females (25.8%) overall. A similar proportion of females from the Wheatbelt participated in sufficient levels of moderate-intensity physical activity (37.5%) compared to Western Australian females overall (37.7%).

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

- 40.3% (62%) walked for recreation or exercise, 28.9% (28%) walked for transport, and 4.7% (8%) cycled for recreation in the week before the survey.
- 39.1% (57%) used the streets or footpaths, and 9.4% (17%) used a public park or oval for physical activity in the week before the survey.
- 41.6% (49%) reported “not having enough time” as a barrier to being more active and 23% (34%) reported “to improve fitness” as a major reason for participating in physical activity.
- 71.1% (74%) were aware of the Department of Health’s “Find thirty, it’s not a big exercise” message.

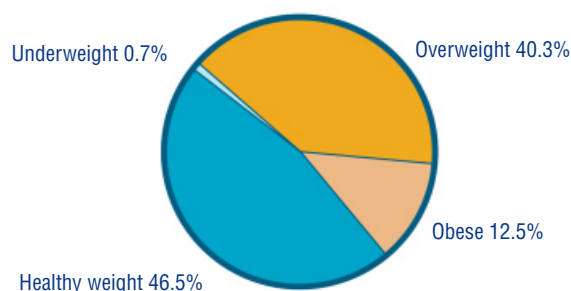
Overweight and Obesity

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 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 Wheatbelt health region is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Levels of BMI



A lower proportion of Wheatbelt adults were of a healthy weight (46.9%), a higher proportion were overweight (40.3%), and a similar proportion obese (12.5%) 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 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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Suggested Citation: McCormack, G., Watt, S., and Milligan, R. (2003). *Physical Activity Levels of the Wheatbelt Health Region (Fact Sheet No.2)*. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.



Department of Health
Department of Sport
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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.