

Alberta Centre for Active Living



ALBERTA SURVEY ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Supported by:   UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

2015



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Background

Canadians are recommended to engage in a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per week and minimize sedentary behaviour (Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, 2011). Sedentary behaviour refers to sitting or lounging activities during waking hours (Sedentary Behaviour Research Network, 2012). Adverse physiological outcomes associated with a sedentary lifestyle are independent and distinct from those attributed to being physically inactive (Tremblay, Colley, Saunders, Healy, & Owen, 2010).

The Alberta Survey on Physical Activity has reported on the physical activity status of adult Albertans since 1993. This is the first year that the Alberta Survey on Physical Activity has reported on sedentary behaviour time of Albertans.

Report Highlights

Physical Activity in Alberta

Physical activity levels have remained relatively stable over the last decade.

60% of Albertans get enough physical activity

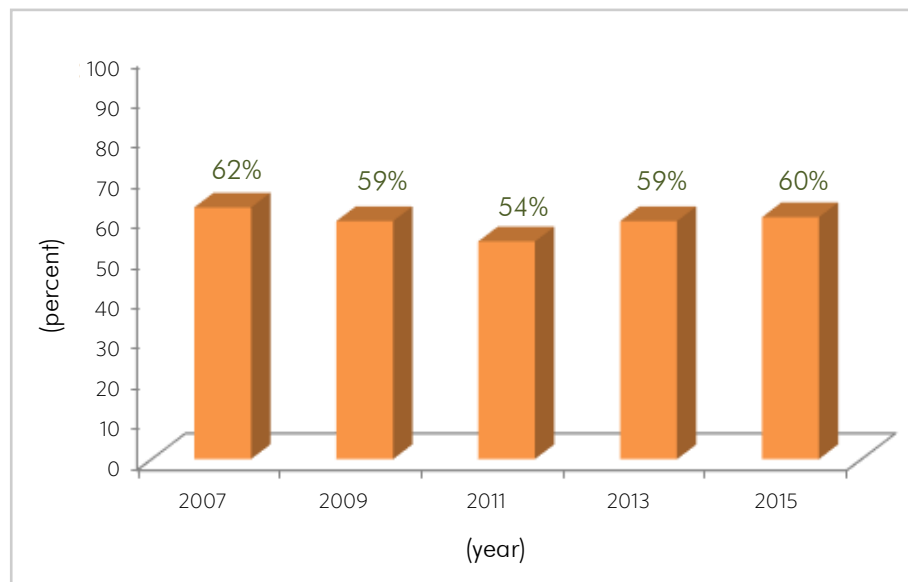


Figure 1. Percent of physically active Albertans over the last decade.

Walking in Alberta

Walking is the most popular physical activity among Albertans (Alberta Government, 2013).

20% of Albertans achieve high levels of walking

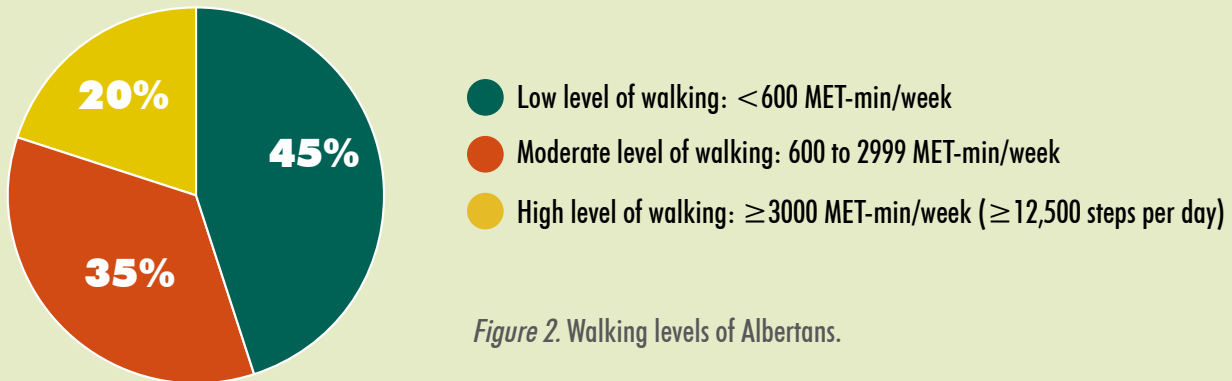


Figure 2. Walking levels of Albertans.

Sedentary Behaviour Time in Alberta

Albertans spend an average of **9 hours per weekday** and **8.25 hours per weekend day** in sedentary activities.

Albertans were categorized into thirds according to their level of sedentary behaviour time during waking hours.

1/3 of Albertans are sedentary for ≥ 10 hours/day

Recommendations

Modifications to lifestyles, programs, services, environments and policies can impact Albertans' time spent being physically active and sedentary. See Table 1 for recommended strategies.

Table 1. Exemplar methods of increasing physical activity and decreasing sedentary behaviour

Transportation	<p>Walk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk to do errands, travel to work and meet up with friends. Park 10 minutes away from work to add 20 minutes of walking to your daily routine. Take public transportation (bus or train). Individuals who take public transportation walk more than vehicle commuters. <p>Ride (cycle or skateboard)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle to run errands, travel to work and meet up with friends. The cities of Edmonton and Calgary are expanding their bike commuter routes. Visit the city websites to map out the best paths and learn the rules of the road for safe cycling. Cities and towns can develop safe commuter routes and provide education to cyclists and drivers on how to share the road.
	<p>Leisure time</p> <p>Family and friends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do physical activities your family enjoys or try new physical activities. Walk with friends after dinner. Provide intergenerational physical activities that the whole family can participate in. <p>Outdoors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to parks, trails, recreation facilities and school yards to be physically active. Maintain safe outdoor spaces for physical activity all year round. <p>Dog walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a habit of walking the dog 2 to 3 times a day.
Workplace	<p>Stand more</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a standing desk and/or standing tables for meetings. Take breaks from sitting. Take active breaks instead of coffee breaks. Set a phone or computer reminder hourly to remind yourself to move around. <p>Make being active easy and attractive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain attractive and safe stairwells. Provide showers, bike storage, fitness equipment, walking maps and/or communal gardens at work. Do workplace physical activity challenges on the UWALK.ca website.

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