Prevalence of Self-Reported Physically Active Adults—United States, 2007

MMWR. 2008;57:1297-1300

1 table omitted

THE REPORT, 2008 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS (2008 Guidelines), released in October by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides new guidelines for aerobic physical activity (i.e., activity that increases breathing and heart rate) and muscle strengthening physical activity.¹ Under the 2008 Guidelines, the minimum recommended aerobic physical activity required to produce substantial health benefits in adults is 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity. Recommendations for aerobic physical activity in the 2008 Guidelines differ from those used in Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) objectives, which call for adults to engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity, 5 days per week, or 20 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity, 3 days per week.² To establish baseline data for the 2008 Guidelines and compare the percentage of respondents who reported meeting these guidelines with the percentage who reported meeting HP2010 objectives, CDC analyzed data from the 2007 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey. This report summarizes the results of that analysis, which indicated that, overall, 64.3% of respondents in 2007 reported meeting the 2008 Guidelines, and 48.8% of the same respondents reported meeting HP2010 objectives.

Public health officials should be aware that, when applied to BRFSS data, the two sets of recommendations yield different results. Additional efforts are needed to further increase physical activity.

BRFSS is a state-based, random-digit–dialed telephone survey of the noninstitutionalized U.S. civilian population aged ≥18 years. Data for the 2007 BRFSS survey were collected from 430,912 respondents (median response rate: 50.6%; median cooperation rate: 72.1%*) and reported by the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Response rates were calculated using guidelines from the Council of American Survey and Research Organizations (CASRO). A total of 31,805 respondents with missing physical activity data were excluded, resulting in a final sample of 399,107.

Since 2001, in alternate years, BRFSS surveys have included the same questions regarding participation in moderate-intensity and vigorous-intensity physical activities. In 2007, to assess participation in moderate activities, respondents were asked, “When you are not working, in a usual week, do you do moderate activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, such as brisk walking, bicycling, vacuuming, gardening, or anything else that causes increase in breathing or heart rate?” Respondents who answered “yes” were then asked, “How many days per week do you do these moderate activities for at least 10 minutes at a time?” Finally, they were asked, “On days when you do vigorous activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, how much total time per day do you spend doing these activities?”

Using the 2008 Guidelines, respondents were classified as physically active if they reported at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, or at least 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity activity, or a combination of moderate-intensity and vigorous-intensity activity (multiplied by two) totaling at least 150 minutes per week. Using the HP2010 objectives, respondents were classified as physically active if they reported at least 30 minutes of moderate activity, 5 or more days per week, or at least 20 minutes of vigorous activity, 3 or more days per week.† Data were analyzed by selected characteristics, age adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population, and weighted to provide overall estimates; 95% confidence intervals were calculated. Statistically significant differences in prevalence were determined by t-test (p<0.05).

Using the 2008 Guidelines, 64.5% of U.S. adults were classified as physically active in 2007, including 68.9% of men and 60.4% of women. By age group, the percentage classified as physically active ranged from 51.2% (≥65 years) to 74.0% (18-24 years). Among racial/ethnic populations, prevalence was lower for non-Hispanic blacks (56.5%) than for non-Hispanic whites (67.5%, p<0.01). By education level, prevalence was lowest among persons with less than a high school diploma (52.2%) and highest among college graduates (70.3%). By U.S. census region, prevalence was lowest among respondents in the South (62.3%) and highest among those in the

---


Port identified two main reasons why a survey data. Findings from this report can develop physical activity initiatives. Evidence of increased physical activity also has been documented for use of point-of-decision prompts and for community-scale and street-scale urban design and land-use policies and practices.9,10

References

1 Available.
2 The response rate is the percentage of persons who completed interviews among all eligible persons, including those who were not successfully contacted. The cooperation rate is the percentage of persons who completed interviews among all eligible persons who were contacted.† For example, both of the following persons would be considered physically active under the 2008 Guidelines but would not be considered physically active under HP2010 objectives: a person who did moderate activity for 25 minutes, 7 days per week, and a person who did vigorous activity for 40 minutes, 2 days per week.‡ West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; and South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Texas. §Normal, overweight, and obese classifications are on the basis of body mass index, which is weight (kg) / height (m). ¶ Normal: 18.5-24.9, overweight: 25.0-29.9, and obese: ≥30.0. |Available at http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/report. ¶¶Available at http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa.

©2009 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.

(Reprinted) JAMA, March 4, 2009—Vol 301, No. 9 927