



healthy living

fact sheet

Physical Activity

- 51% of British Columbians are not sufficiently physically active.¹
- Brisk walking has the greatest potential for increasing the overall activity levels of a sedentary population.²
- People and families living in poverty or in low-income circumstances tend to be less active and face significant challenges in making lifestyle changes.³
- Just 30 minutes of moderate exercise every day can dramatically improve your health.⁴
- When compared to residents of car-dependent communities, residents of walk-able communities typically walk two to four times as much and drive five to 15% less.⁵
- People who live in neighbourhoods offering a mix of shops and businesses within easy walking distance have a 35% lower risk of obesity.⁷
- 30% – 40% of Canadians expressed difficulty in finding a companion for fitness activities, and in finding a program where they could participate with their children.⁸
- Studies suggest that creating and improving places suited to physical activity can result in a 25% increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times per week.⁹
- The average Canadian child is sedentary for three to five hours per day in front of a television.¹⁰
- 40% of Canadian children already have at least one risk factor for heart disease due to an inactive lifestyle.¹¹
- Only 26% of adult women, compared to 43% of adult men, participate regularly in sport. A similar gender discrepancy exists at younger ages, as 48% of girls compared with 61% of boys aged five to 14 are active in sport.¹²

¹ ActNowBC. *Measuring Our Success: Baseline Document*. 2006

http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2006/ActNowBC_Baseline.pdf Accessed January 15, 2008.

^{2,3} BC Healthy Living Alliance Physical Activity Strategy, March 2007

⁴ Public Health Agency of Canada. *Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living*. 1997. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/older/index.html> Accessed January 15, 2008.

⁵ Victoria Transport Policy Institute. <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm38.htm> Accessed January 15, 2008.

⁶⁻⁸ BC Healthy Living Alliance Physical Activity Strategy, March 2007

⁹ Prevention Institute. *Healthy Eating & Physical Activity: Addressing Inequities in Urban Environments*. 2007 <http://preventioninstitute.org/sa/pdf/RWJNC.pdf> Accessed January 15, 2008.

¹⁰ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute

¹¹ Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1998, and Fishburne, Graham. (1991). *The Well-Being of Children and Youths*. ACFWB Newsletter. May.

¹² 1998 General Social Survey data, summarized in the Sport Canada report on Sport Participation in Canada