

2008 AICR Physical Activity Survey: Summary

1. **Active or Inactive:** In a telephone survey conducted in early summer (June 12-16) 2008, we asked 1027 Americans¹ aged 18 and over if they considered themselves physically active.

- Question: Do you agree with the following statement: "I consider myself a physically active person"?

Almost three-quarters of respondents (73 percent) self-identify as physically active.

One out of four (25 percent) do not consider themselves physically active.

2. **Awareness:** We asked all respondents if regular physical activity was protective against several different health conditions.

We asked about conditions against which physical activity provides proven protection, such as obesity, heart disease and cancer; we also asked about conditions that have no link to physical activity, such as anemia and food allergies.

- Question: Which of the following health questions does physical activity protect against? Does it protect against ...?

Obesity	86%
High blood pressure	82 %
Heart disease	82%
Cancer	40%
Kidney disease	36%
Anemia	26%
Food allergies	12%

Awareness that physical activity protects against cancer is low - only 2 out 5 respondents (40 percent) are aware of the link.

(The largest difference in awareness between men and women occurs with the link to cancer: only 35% of men

¹ Results were statistically weighted to reflect the current US population based on Census data; the weighted number of respondents in the total survey population was 2284.

and 44% of women recognize that physical activity protects against cancer.)

2a. When the responses to this question from those who self-identify as physically active (ACTIVE) are compared to responses from those who do NOT consider themselves physically active (INACTIVE), we find that awareness of ALL proven links is higher among ACTIVE respondents.

However, ACTIVE respondents are also slightly more prone to believe that physical activity can protect them from conditions that it cannot, such as anemia and food allergies.

SUBSET: ACTIVE RESPONDENTS

Obesity	89%
Heart disease	85%
High blood pressure	84%
Cancer	43%
Kidney disease	36%
Anemia	27%
Food allergies	13%
Don't Know	6%

2b. Among INACTIVE respondents, awareness of ALL proven links between physical activity and health protection was lower.

SUBSET: INACTIVE RESPONDENTS

Obesity	78%
High blood pressure	77%
Heart disease	75%
Kidney disease	33%
Cancer	30%
Anemia	22%
Don't know	13%
Food allergies	11%

Note that the largest difference in awareness between ACTIVE and INACTIVE respondents was for cancer protection - awareness of this link was 13 percentage points lower among the INACTIVE.

3. **Frequency and Intensity:** Of those ACTIVE respondents, nearly 1 out of 3 (31 percent) engages in moderate physical activity **two to three times per week**; almost as

many (29 percent) ACTIVE respondents engage in moderate physical activity **on a daily basis**.

- Question: Some physical activities, such as a leisurely walk or a light housework, are not intense enough to cause you to breathe harder and your heart to pump faster.

How often do you engage in any physical activity that DOES cause your heartbeat to increase and your breathing to deepen? Would you say...?

SUBSET: ACTIVE RESPONDENTS

Two to three times per week	31%
Daily	29%
Four to six times per week	25%
Never/very infrequently	12%

4. **Duration:** Of ACTIVE respondents, 27 percent engage in physical activity that lasts at least half an hour to 45 minutes; just as many (27 percent) engage in activity for only 15 minutes to half an hour.

- Question: On those occasions when you engage in physical activity that causes your heartbeat to increase and your breathing to deepen, how much time do you spend on average?

SUBSET: ACTIVE RESPONDENTS

Half an hour to 45 minutes at a time	27%
15 minutes to half an hour	27%
One hour or more	20%
45 minutes to 1 hour	18%
Less than 15 minutes	7%

- 4a. **Meeting AICR Recommendation:** Only sixteen percent (or one in seven) of respondents to the survey are currently meeting AICR's recommendation for cancer protection, which is: Be moderately physically active for at least 30 minutes every day.

Out of self-identified ACTIVE respondents, the number of individuals meeting AICR recommendation is only slightly higher: 21 percent.

- To calculate this, we cross-tabbed the respondents who say they are moderately physically active every day with those who say they are active for **at least 30 minutes at a time. All numbers in the calculation below**

are weighted to bring results in line with the US population based on US Census data:

No. who exercise between 30-45 minutes daily: 112
No. who exercise between 45-60 minutes daily: 83
No. who exercise more than one hour daily: 158
TOTAL: 353

Total weighted population (including those who do NOT consider themselves physically active): 2284

- 353 out of 2284 = 16 PERCENT of ALL RESPONDENTS now meet AICR's recommendation

Total weighted population of ACTIVE respondents only: 1667

- 353 out of 1667 = 21 PERCENT OF ACTIVE RESPONDENTS now meet AICR's recommendation

5. **Reasons to be Active:** Feeling good is the number one reason respondents cite for getting regular physical activity. When read a list of possible reasons to be physically active (and given the ability to choose more than one), nearly nine out of ten ACTIVE respondents (87 percent) say they exercise to feel good and have more energy.

- Question: Why are you physically active? Is it to...?

SUBSET: ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Feel good/have more energy	87%
Have fun	75%
Prevent weight gain	71%
Protect against heart disease	69%
To look good	67%
To lose weight	57%
To protect against cancer	32%

6. **Reasons to Stay on the Couch:** Among those who do not consider themselves physically active, the number one reason for lack of activity is not enough time, followed by medical/physical reasons. When read a list of possible reasons to be inactive (and given the ability to choose more than one), one in three physically inactive respondents (34 percent) said they were too busy to get more activity.

- Question: What keeps you from being more physically active?

SUBSET: INACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Too busy	34%
Medical/physical reason	32%
No interest/No need	12%
Too lazy	3%
Don't know where to start	3%
Too expensive	2%
Age	2%
Weather	1%