Modifiable risk factors

- The majority of survey respondents stated that they undertake physical activity at least two to four times a week.
- Females, people aged 65 years and over, and people living on low incomes were more likely than others to state that they never do any physical exercise.

**WHAT THIS IS ABOUT**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified the lack of physical activity as one of the biggest contributors to the global burden of disease. Physical inactivity has been labelled second only to smoking as a modifiable risk factor for poor health.\(^\text{101}\) Maori and Pacific Islands populations, most of whom live in New Zealand’s largest cities, are high risk populations.

This section includes information on:
- Physical activity
- Perceived barriers to physical activity
- Smoking.

**WHAT DID WE FIND?**

Physical activity

Participation in physical activity is not an easy thing to measure and is not centrally measured in New Zealand. This measure is from the Eight Cities Quality of Life Survey 2002, and it shows the frequency of physical activity by respondents aged 18 years and over.

The survey asked respondents how often they take part in physical activity (defined in the survey as any activity such as sport, brisk walking, running or gardening that increases their heart rate or breathing for 30 minutes or more).\(^\text{102}\)

Overall, the majority of respondents stated that they undertake physical activity at least two to four times a week, with one third to one half indicating that they undertake activity every day, or nearly every day (this varied across cities).

Those significantly more likely to never exercise included females, those aged 65 years and over, people living in a household with one or two members, and people on income less than $20,000 per year.

When asked to state the three main things that they did in their free time, participating in sports/physical activity was the main activity stated in all eight cities, with percentages ranging from 61% in Manukau to 72% in North Shore.

Of the main ethnic groups, Europeans and Maori had the highest percentage (69% for both groups) that said they took part in sports or physical activity, while Pacific Islands people had the lowest percentage (57%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every/nearly everyday</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 times a week</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 times a month</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month or less</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: Eight Cities Quality of Life Survey 2002


\(^\text{102}\) Within New Zealand, Sports and Recreation New Zealand’s ‘Push Play’ campaign recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. Moderate intensity physical activity is defined as activity that will cause a slight but not noticeable increase in breathing and heart rate (for example, a brisk walk).