

Data shows people must move more, sit less

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Australians must move more and sit less with the latest Heart Foundation report providing further evidence that the prevalence of cardiovascular disease risk factors is lower among Australian who meet physical activity recommendations.

The latest Heart Foundation and Deakin University report, Australian Heart Disease Statistics - Physical activity and cardiovascular disease, highlights the importance of [physical activity](#) as a risk factor in the prevention and management of [cardiovascular disease](#).

The report was produced as part of the Heart Foundation and Deakin University collaborative HeartStats project.

"As with our previous HeartStats reports, this document highlights the value of comprehensive, national datasets to understanding the cardiovascular health status of Australians," said lead author, Karen Peterson from Deakin's Centre for Population Health Research.

"The report draws attention to differences in the prevalence of [risk factors](#) between demographic groups in Australia, a reminder that a one-size-fits-all approach to preventive activities will only serve to widen health inequalities."

Former Chair of the Heart Foundation Physical Activity Advisory Committee and co-director of the Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition at Deakin University, Professor Jo Salmon said technological and transport advances were resulting in unprecedented levels of

sedentary behaviour.

"In Australia, the likelihood of being highly active decreases as adults get older, while sedentary behaviour levels increase with age from 18 years," Professor Salmon said.

"Importantly, [physical activity levels](#) are influenced by a range of socioeconomic and cultural factors.

"People living in areas with lower disadvantage were more likely to meet physical activity recommendations than people in areas with higher disadvantage (52.3% and 35.5% respectively).

"Similarly, the proportion of children meeting both physical activity and screen-based activity recommendations was lowest amongst those living in highly disadvantaged areas (29.4%)."

Heart Foundation Chief Medical Advisor Professor Garry Jennings said physical inactivity contributed to an estimated 14,000 deaths annually, which meant it was surprising that successive Australian governments had not adopted cost-effective preventative measures promoting active lives.

"To help guide the way, the Heart Foundation released the Blueprint for an Active Australia, which was a comprehensive compendium of 13 action areas that will boost our low rates of physical activity," Professor Jennings said.

"We also convened a national physical activity consensus forum at Parliament House last year to highlight the key elements that should underpin a national action plan.

"We now have a clear way forward and urge all governments to play

their part in getting the nation to move more, sit less.

"We hope that in years to come we will be able to release statistics that demonstrate we have turned the corner on physical inactivity."

More information: The Heart Foundation report "Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Disease": [heartfoundation.org.au/about-u ... t-disease-statistics](http://heartfoundation.org.au/about-us/physical-activity-and-cardiovascular-disease-statistics)

Provided by Deakin University

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