

# Physical Activity

## Why Is This Important?

Physical activity is movement that increases heart rate and breathing. Benefits include prevention and control of chronic illnesses like cancer, stroke, heart disease and diabetes, optimal childhood growth and development and continued independent living in later life. Physical activity is positively linked to [self-rated health](#) and [self-rated mental health](#). Physical activity tends to decrease with age. Women are less likely to be physically active than men. People with low incomes are more likely to report barriers that prevent them from being physically active.

## What Is Being Done?

Canada's [Physical Activity Guidelines](#) and Report card by [Active Healthy Kids Canada](#).

[in Motion](#) programs in Saskatoon and area.

City of Saskatoon's [Leisure Access Program](#).

Active transportation in [City of Saskatoon](#) and [Humboldt's](#) municipal plans.

## What More Can Be Done?

[What is Health Equity?](#) A Primer for the Health Care System

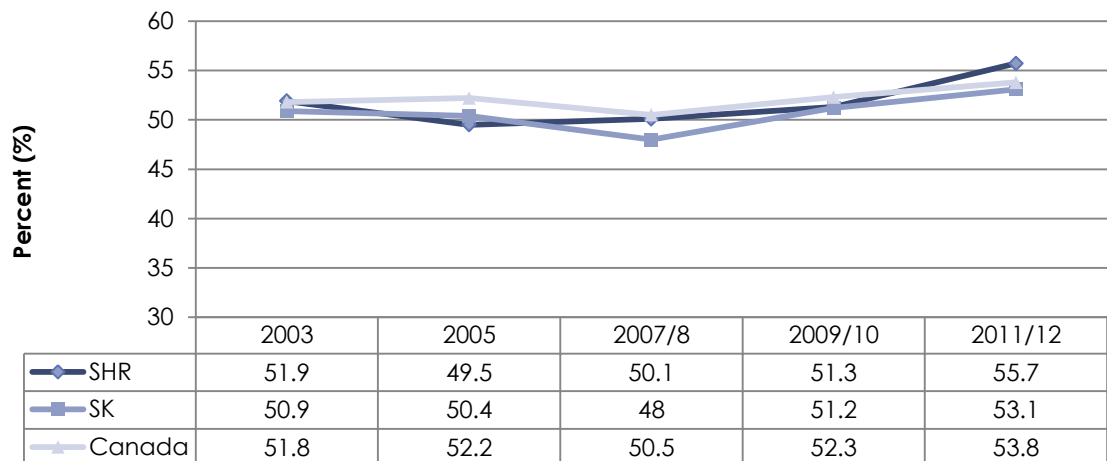
Chief Medical Health Officer's [Call to Action](#)

## Highlights

### More people are getting physically active during their leisure time.

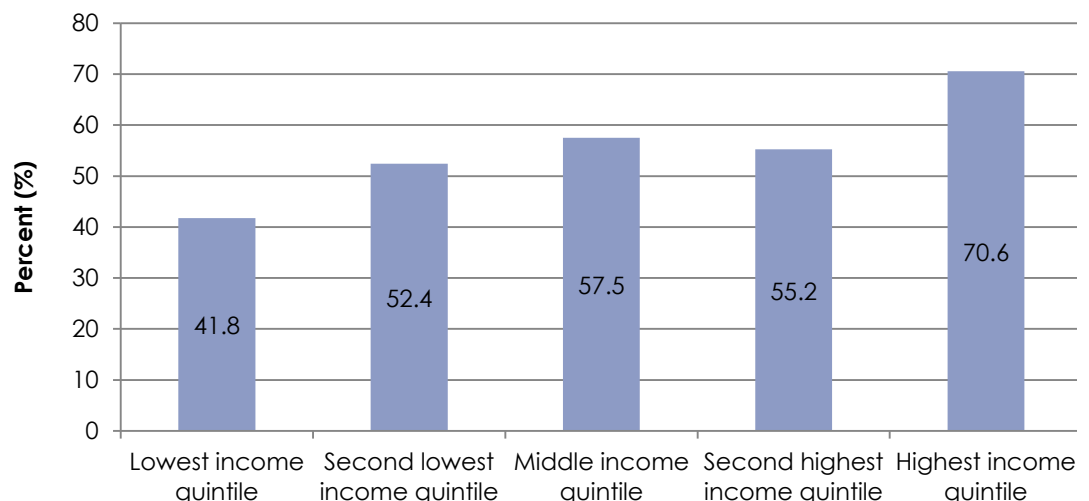
- A little more than half of people (55.7%) reported that they were “moderately active” to “physically active” during their leisure time in 2011/12. These rates are very similar to Saskatchewan and Canadian averages (*Figure 1*). This equates to almost 152,000 people in the Region, but means that nearly 120,000 people are not getting enough physical activity.
- Those in the lowest income quintile were significantly less physically active (41.8%) than those in the highest income quintile (70.6%; *Figure 2*).
- Physical activity varies by [sub-group](#), including age, household income and education level.

**Figure 1: Individuals “Moderately Active” or “Physically Active” During Leisure Time in Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan and Canada, 2003 to 2012**



Source: [Statistics Canada](#)

**Figure 2: Individuals “Moderately Active” or “Physically Active” During Leisure Time by Household Income Quintile, Saskatoon, 2008 to 2012**



Source: [Statistics Canada](#). This study was conducted, in part, with data provided by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health to the Health Quality Council. The interpretations and conclusions herein do not necessarily represent those of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health or Government of Saskatchewan. The analyses are based on data from Statistics Canada and the opinions expressed do not represent the views of Statistics Canada.