

HEALTHY NORTH DAKOTA



HIGHLIGHTS

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Physical inactivity is not moving

The percentage of North Dakotans who do not get the recommended amount of physical activity has remained between 47 percent and 49 percent for the past three years (2001-2003), and the percentage of people who reported no leisure-time physical activity remained stable at between 22 percent and 24 percent.

The health benefits associated with physical activity begin immediately. Regular activity reduces the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, colon cancer and diabetes. It also helps to maintain a healthy weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles and joints; reduces symptoms of anxiety; and enhances the quality of life.

Inactivity increases with advancing age

- Two-thirds of people 65 and older report inadequate physical activity. (Figure 1) (North Dakota, 2003).
- Females (54%) are at higher risk than males (48%) of not getting adequate physical activity. (North Dakota, 2003)
- The risk for inadequate physical activity decreases with rising education. (North Dakota, 2003)
- Other groups at increased risk for not getting adequate physical activity include people who are widowed, report fair or poor general health, are retired, have not completed high school or have a disability. (Figure 2) (North Dakota, 2003)

Figure 1: Percentage of North Dakotans Not Getting Recommended Physical Activity, by Age Group, 2003

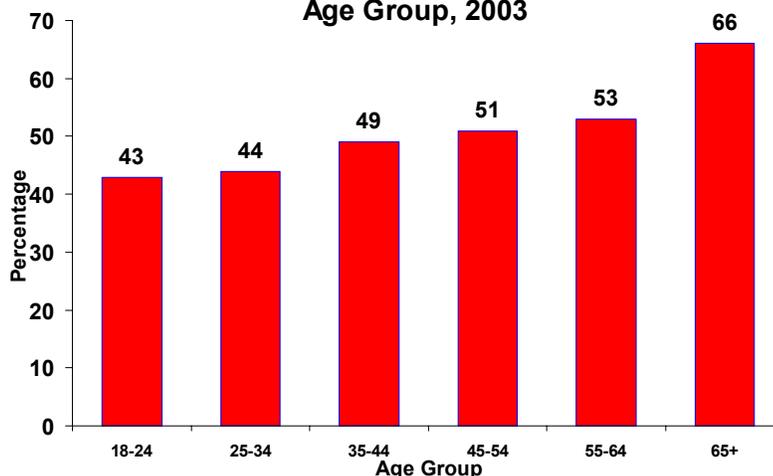
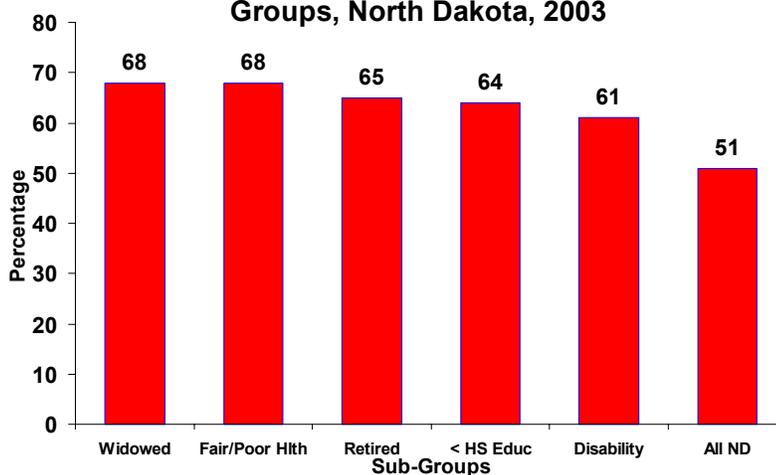


Figure 2: Prevalence of Not Getting Recommended Physical Activity Among Sub-Groups, North Dakota, 2003



Absence of leisure-time activity similar to U.S. rate

Physical inactivity is a problem nationwide. In its measures of adult physical activity, North Dakota is near the middle when compared to all states.

Community-based interventions known to effectively change physical activity behavior will be necessary to make substantial progress reducing this health risk factor.

“**Healthy North Dakota - Highlights**” is prepared by the Department of Community Medicine, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences for the North Dakota Department of Health.

To learn more about physical inactivity and other behavioral health risks in NORTH DAKOTA, contact the North Dakota Department of Health, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept 301, Bismarck, ND 58505; 701.323.2372, or visit www.health.state.nd.us.



EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

To increase physical activity:

- Provide an environment that promotes physical activity; e.g., safe, accessible and attractive trails for walking and biking.
- Open schools for community recreation, and encourage the use of malls and other indoor protected locations to provide safe places for walking in any weather.
- Provide community-based programs to meet the needs of specific populations, such as minority groups, older adults, people with disabilities and low-income groups.
- Encourage employers to provide supportive worksite environments and policies that offer opportunities for employees to incorporate moderate physical activity into their daily lives.
- Encourage health-care providers to prescribe physical activity routinely and to discuss with patients the benefits of incorporating physical activity into their daily lives.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Data presented in this “**Healthy North Dakota - Highlights**” come from the North Dakota Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) for year 2003. Every year since 1984, a random sample of adult (age 18 and older) North Dakotans has been interviewed about a wide variety of behavioral risks that are important to staying healthy. Full details of the survey method used to secure these data can be seen at www.cdc.gov/brfss.

In 2003, there were 3,026 respondents to the North Dakota BRFSS. The responses described in this issue concern:

No leisure time physical activity: Respondents who reported no leisure time physical activity in the past month.

Recommended (adequate) levels of physical activity: Respondents who report doing moderate physical activity for 30 or more minutes per day, five or more days per week, or respondents who report doing vigorous physical activity for 20 or more minutes per day, three or more days per week.

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