

# NHS 2007/8: Physical Activity, Nutrition and BMI Fact Sheet (October 2009)

This fact sheet presents the results for physical activity, nutrition and body mass index from the National Health Survey (NHS) conducted from late 2007 to early 2008. A total of 1,970 Tasmanians participated in this survey.

Data reliability was evaluated using relative standard errors (RSEs). The RSE is the sampling error expressed as a percentage of the survey estimate to which it relates. Data items with RSEs of more than 25% have been identified and should be used with caution.

## Physical Activity

Physical inactivity is a modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular disease, with an impact similar to smoking, high cholesterol, and hypertension.<sup>1</sup> Physical inactivity is also a risk factor for type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

The National Physical Activity Guidelines recommend a moderate level of exercise, which includes at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. The NHS collects data on physical exercise relating to sport, recreation or fitness, excluding activity in the form of gardening, work etc.

The proportion of Tasmanians reporting inadequate physical exercise levels of 72.7% is comparable to the national proportion of 72.8%.

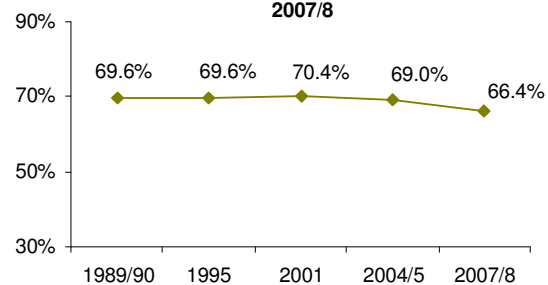
### Sedentary/Low Exercise Levels 18 Years and over by Jurisdiction, 2007/8

	Sedentary/low exercise
NSW	71.7%
Vic	72.8%
Qld	75.7%
SA	74.4%
WA	70.8%
ACT	68.7%
Tas	72.7%
Aus	72.8%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

<sup>1</sup> Kavanagh T, Exercise in the Primary Prevention of Coronary Artery Disease, Canadian Journal of Cardiology, Vol. 17, No 2, 2001

### Inadequate Levels of Physical Exercise\*, 15 Years and Over, Tasmania 1989/90 - 2007/8



\*Includes sedentary and low levels of exercise; NHS 1989/90 - 2007/8

Physical exercise levels are related to age, with a higher proportion of sedentary adults in older age groups. Tasmanians aged 15-24 years reported the highest levels of sufficient physical activity (moderate or high levels) at 35.3%.

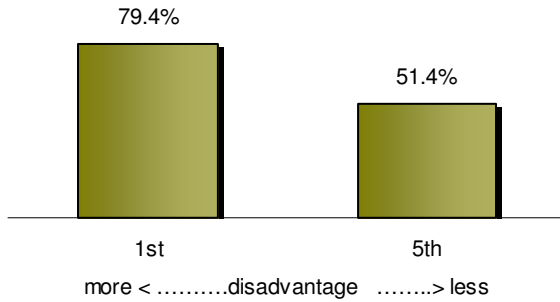
### Physical Exercise Levels by Age, Tasmania 2007/8

	Age				
	15-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Sedentary	23.8%	33.0%	34.3%	36.6%	49.2%
Low	40.7%	40.8%	34.4%	35.0%	28.4%
Moderate	22.5%	19.3%*	23.9%	24.2%	20.3%
High	12.8%*	6.0%	7.4%*	4.1%*	2.0%*

\*RSE=>25%; NHS 2007/8, State Tables 11.1 and 11.3

The graph below shows that inadequate physical exercise is associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Of all Tasmanians aged 15 years and over in the first quintile of disadvantage, 79.4% reported sedentary/low level activity compared to only 51.4% of Tasmanians in the fifth quintile.

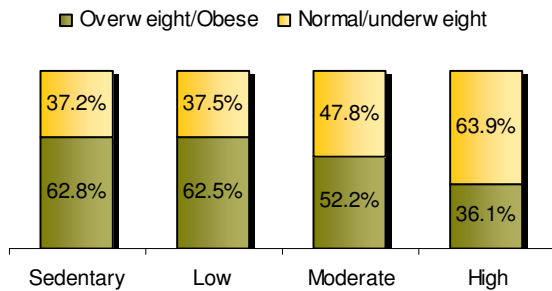
**Sedentary/Low Level Exercise by Index of Disadvantage, Age 15 Years and Over, Tasmania 2007/8**



NHS 2007/8, State Table 13.3

The graph below shows that Tasmanians who are sedentary or engage in low level exercise are more likely to be overweight or obese.

**Physical Exercise Levels by Self-Reported BMI Category, 15 Years and Over, Tasmania, 2007-08**



NHS 2007/8 CURF

**Nutrition**

Poor nutrition is a risk factor for a range of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. It has been estimated that around 30% of all cancers are preventable by a diet high in vegetables and fruit.<sup>2</sup>

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends a daily intake of five or more serves of vegetables and two or more serves of fruit.

The proportion of Tasmanians reporting inadequate vegetable or fruit consumption is the lowest of all jurisdictions, and well below the national level.

<sup>2</sup> World Cancer Research Fund & American Institute for Cancer Research, Food, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer: A Global Perspective, American Institute for Cancer Research, Washington, DC, 1997

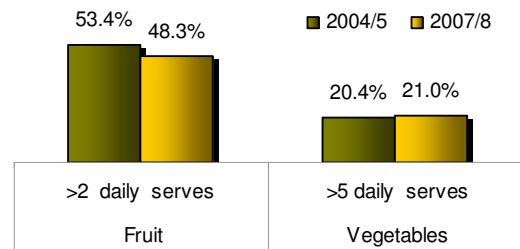
**Inadequate Fruit or Vegetable Consumption, 18 Years and over by Jurisdiction, 2007/8**

NSW	94.1%
Vic	93.7%
Qld	94.8%
SA	91.0%
WA	93.4%
ACT	95.1%
Tas	88.8%
Aus	93.8%

NHS 2007/8, State Tables

The proportion of Tasmanians consuming adequate serves of fruit has fallen by 5.1% since 2004/5.

**Adequate Fruit and Vegetable Consumption, 15 Years and Over, 2004/5 and 2007/8**



NHS 2004/5 CURF, NHS 2007/8, State Tables 13.1, 13.3

The greatest proportion of Tasmanians reporting adequate consumption of vegetables and fruit are aged 55+ years.

**Vegetable and Fruit Consumption by Age, Tasmania 2007/8**

Age	Vegetables $\geq 5$ serves	Fruit $\geq 2$ serves
15-24	19.1%*	43.0%
25-34	15.6%*	43.7%
35-44	16.0%*	43.6%
45-54	21.9%*	45.1%
55-64	27.7%	54.9%
65+	24.7%	59.3%
Total 15+	21.0%	48.4%

\*RSE=>25%; NHS 2007/8, State Tables 11.1 and 11.3

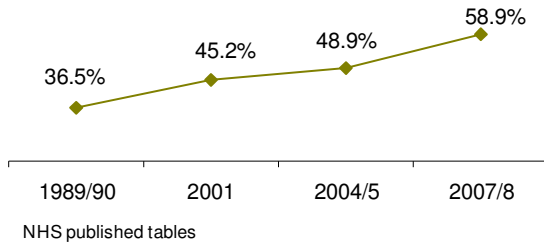
## Body Mass Index (BMI)

Overweight and obesity are risk factors for a number of chronic conditions, including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and stroke.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines weight status according to BMI, the ratio of weight (in kilograms) divided by height (in metres squared). The NHS calculates BMI from self-reported height and weight, but in 2007/8 also provided measured BMI for the first time.

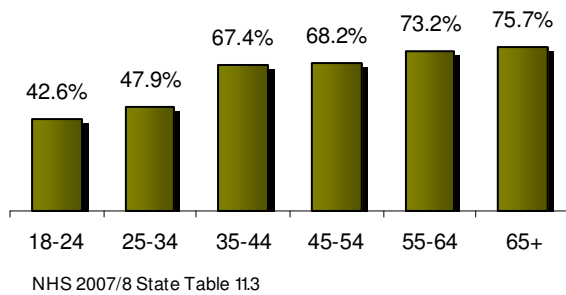
The proportion of the Tasmanian population with a **self-reported BMI** of overweight/obese increased to 58.9% in 2007/8. **Measured BMI** of overweight and obese for Tasmanians aged 18 years and over was 63.9%.

**Self-Reported BMI Overweight/Obese, 18 Years and over Tasmania, 1989/90-2007/8**



The prevalence of overweight and obesity increases with age. Over 70% of Tasmanians over the age of 55 years were overweight or obese in 2007/8.

**Measured BMI Overweight/Obese by Age, Tasmania 2007/8**



Obesity is more prevalent among females and those aged over 35 years.

**Measured Obesity by Gender and Age, Tasmania 2007/8**

	Males	Females	Persons
18-24	n/a	17.1%*	13.9%*
25-34	17.7%*	21.1%*	19.4%
35-44	28.4%	39.5%	34.4%
45-54	25.2%	39.0%	32.2%
55-64	32.2%	24.6%	28.3%
65+	23.7%	31.1%	27.5%
18+	23.6%	29.7%	26.7%

\*RSE=>25%; NHS 2007/8, State Table 11.3

