

Appendix B. Methodology

The 2003 Physical Activity Monitor is the tenth nationwide survey on physical activity conducted by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute—after the 1981 Canada Fitness Survey,¹ the 1988 Campbell Survey on Well-Being in Canada,² and the 1995, 1997,³ 1998, 1999, 2000,⁴ 2001, and 2002 waves of the Physical Activity Monitor. The 2003 survey provides a synopsis of variables associated with policy and decision-making to increase active living among Canadians and describes current physical activity levels in Canada according to Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey.⁵

Questionnaire content

The content of the 2003 Physical Activity Monitor was determined by the Institute in collaboration with partners: the Public Health Agency of Canada and the provincial and territorial government departments concerned with fitness, active living, leisure, sport, and recreation through the auspices of the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council.

In addition to monitoring progress toward achieving the goal of reducing physical inactivity by 10 percentage points in Canada by 2010, the report, based on the questionnaire, was designed to:

- provide data on physical activity patterns;
- examine healthy lifestyles among vulnerable groups (aboriginal, immigrants, rural); and,
- describe trends, by updating previously released data on physical activity in Canada. These factors include: awareness of Canada's guidelines for physical activity; beliefs about the amount and adequacy of health benefits of physical activity; and future intention.

Data collection

Data from the Physical Activity Monitor were collected throughout the full calendar year of 2003 by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University in Ontario. ISR interviewers captured data directly during the interviews using a CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviews) system. Canadians aged 15 and over were asked about their physical activity patterns, attitudes, and awareness of physical activity opportunities.

Survey design

The 2003 sample for the Physical Activity Monitor was selected using random-digit dialing from household-based telephone exchanges. Findings in this report are based on a final country-wide sample of 7,890 Canadian adults. The random sample of households was selected roughly proportional to the population in each province and territory with a minimum sample size of 250 for each jurisdiction. For each selected household, one individual over the age of 15 was selected at random, thus providing a random sample of individuals in Canada.

The overall response rate obtained in the 2003 Physical Activity Monitor was 51%. In telephone surveys of this type, a response rate of approximately 50–65% has been typical

in the past, with the response rates dropping in recent years. The sample take is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

SAMPLE TAKE BY REGION AND PROVINCE	
	Adults 15+
Canada	7,890
Atlantic	822
Newfoundland	204
Prince Edward Island	207
Nova Scotia	206
New Brunswick	205
Quebec	1,767
Ontario	3,082
West	1,732
Manitoba	207
Saskatchewan	218
Alberta	572
British Columbia	735
North	495
Yukon	262
Northwest Territories	221
Nunavut	12

When there is non-response, there is the potential for bias if the responses of participants do not represent those of non-participants. Potential bias was identified by comparing the demographic variables to the latest Census data. Respondents are more likely to be female and to have a university degree, a common occurrence in telephone surveys.⁶

Data analysis

The sample weights were adjusted using a post-stratification adjustment to reflect the latest Census distributions for age and sex. All numbers have a statistical error associated with them by virtue of the random selection of the sample. The first table in Appendix A permits statistical tests of significance between percentages, taking into account sample design, design effect, and sample size. It specifies the difference required between two estimates for statistical significance. Caution should be used in interpreting data based on small cell sizes, particularly for provincial comparisons. According to standard practice, data released in the tables have been screened to ensure that each statistic is based on a minimum of 30 individuals. Insufficient sample size is denoted by “-”. “Don’t know” and “refused” responses generally amount to less than 3 % and are excluded in the tables as they have a negligible effect on estimates.

¹ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. (1983). *Fitness and lifestyle in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Author.

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- ² Stephens, T., & Craig, C.L. (1990). *The well-being of Canadians: Highlights of the 1988 Campbell Survey*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute.
- ³ Craig, C.L., Russell, S.J., Cameron, C., & Beaulieu, A. (1999). *Foundation for joint action: Reducing physical inactivity*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute.
- ⁴ Craig, C.L., Cameron, C., Russell, S.J., & Beaulieu, A. (2001). *Increasing physical activity: Supporting children's participation*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute.
- ⁵ Statistics Canada (2003). Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) - Cycle 1.1 [On-line]. Available: <http://www.statcan.ca/francais/concepts/health/>
- ⁶ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. (1996). 1995 Survey methodology. *Progress in Prevention*.