

RESEARCH & FINDINGS:

Walking for Transportation or Leisure Among U.S. Women and Men
National Health Interview Survey, 2005–2015

What was the purpose of this study?

To assess how the percentage of adults who report walking for leisure or transportation has changed from 2005 to 2015, and to determine whether those changes varied by select demographic and health-related characteristics.

Why is this study important?

Walking is an easy way for most people to be physically active. A previous report showed that the self-reported prevalence of walking increased by 6 percentage points from 2005 to 2010, but it is unknown whether this increase has continued.



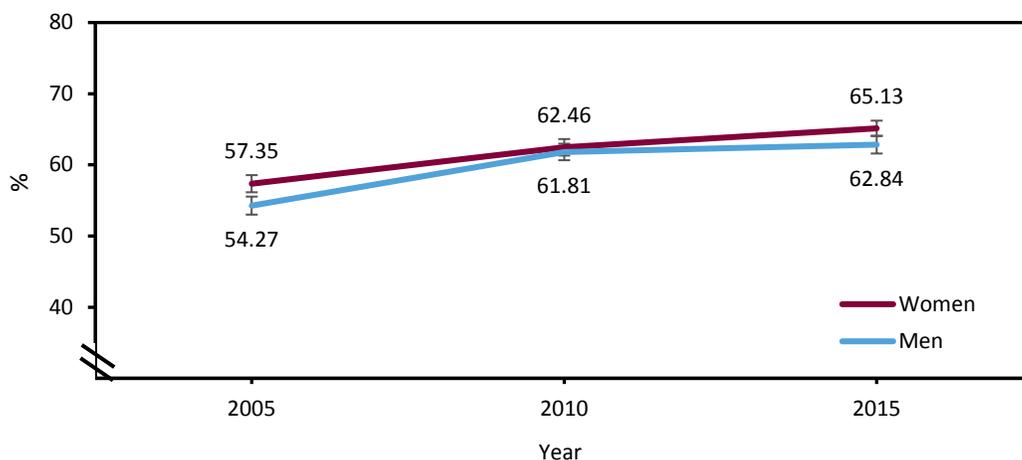
For this study, walking was defined as engaging in at least one 10-minute period of transportation or leisure walking in the past 7 days at the time of survey.

How did the CDC perform this study?

CDC analyzed data on adults aged ≥ 18 years from the 2005, 2010 and 2015 National Health Interview Surveys, a national in-person survey of U.S. households.

What did this study find?

- The percentage of women and men who reported walking significantly increased from 2005 to 2015; however, among men, the increase stalled between 2010 and 2015.
- Demographic disparities in walking continue to exist and appear to have widened by education level for men.



Public Health Implications

People need safe, convenient places to walk and be active.

Although walking is an easy and popular form of physical activity, barriers exist that can be addressed through community design enhancements and supportive programs.

Creating or modifying environments to make it easier and safer for people to walk not only helps increase physical activity—it can also make communities better places to live.



The way a community is designed can either discourage or support walking among its residents.

THE 3 D's: DESIGN. DEVELOP. DELIVER.

A Prescription for Walkable Communities

DESIGN communities and streets that make walking safe and easy for all.

For example, streets can be designed to include sidewalks and features that slow traffic, and residential areas can be located within short walking distance of schools, worksites, public transportation, stores, and other places that people regularly visit.

DEVELOP or enhance access to places for walking.

For example, communities can create new walking trails or improve the quality and connectivity of existing sidewalks and walking paths.

DELIVER community programs that help adults walk.

For example, evidence-based programs that help adults start and continue to walk, such as walking clubs or pedestrian education classes, can be implemented in community settings and tailored to participants' interests and abilities.