

# International Physical Activity Questionnaire

## Background

The purpose of the International Physical Activity Questionnaires (IPAQ) is to provide a set of well-developed instruments that can be used internationally to obtain comparable estimates of physical activity. There are two versions of the questionnaire. The short version is suitable for use in national and regional surveillance systems and the long version provide more detailed information often required in research work or for evaluation purposes.

## Rationale

The public health burden of a sedentary lifestyle has been recognized globally, but until recently, the prevalence and impact of the problem has not been studied in a uniform and systematic fashion. The questionnaire is the most feasible instrument for measuring physical activity in large groups or populations. However, many of the existing instruments are not comparable in the type of activities surveyed (i.e., leisure-time activities only) and format for data collection.

In response to the global demand for comparable and valid measures of physical activity within and between countries, IPAQ was developed for surveillance activities and to guide policy development related to health-enhancing physical activity across various life domains.

## Scoring

Scoring of the IPAQ is based on a metric called METs, which are multiples of the resting metabolic rate. The IPAQ scoring description can be found [here](#)

### Continuous Score

Expressed as MET-min per week: MET level x minutes of activity/day x days per week

MET levels:

- **Light** - 3.3 METs
- **Moderate** - 4.0 METs
- **Vigorous** - 8.0 METs

Total MET-minutes/week = Light (3.3 x min x days) + Mod (4.0 x min x days) + Vig (8.0 x min x days)

### Categorical Score

Three levels (categories) of physical activity are proposed:

#### Category 1: Low

This is the lowest level of physical activity. Those individuals who not meet criteria for categories 2 or 3 are considered low/inactive.

## Category 2: Moderate

Any one of the following 3 criteria:

- 3 or more days of vigorous activity of at least 20 minutes per day **OR**
- 5 or more days of moderate-intensity activity or walking of at least 30 minutes per day **OR**
- 5 or more days of any combination of walking, moderate-intensity or vigorous intensity activities achieving a minimum of at least 600 MET-min/week.

## Category 3: High

Any one of the following 2 criteria:

- Vigorous-intensity activity on at least 3 days and accumulating at least 1500 MET-minutes/ week **OR**
- 7 or more days of any combination of walking, moderate-intensity or vigorous intensity activities achieving a minimum of at least 3000 MET-minutes/week

## References

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