



What influences adults to be active?

Several factors can influence adults' activity patterns on different levels, eg, individual, social, political or environmental. These interact and play a key role in determining whether an individual will be active or not. Gaining an understanding of these factors offers an insight into why some adults are active and others are not.



Demographic factors

The following groups of people have lower activity levels than their counterparts:

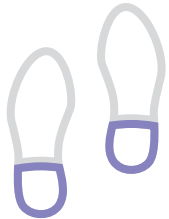
- women
- older adults
- adults with a low socio-economic status
- non-white adults
- adults with low education levels.



Environmental factors

Research has found that aspects of the built environment are associated with higher activity levels. These include:

- accessible recreation facilities
- good pavements
- safe road crossings
- attractive sights in the area
- well connected paths to workplaces
- less densely populated areas
- short travel distances to non-residential areas.



Psychological factors

Adults are more likely to be active if they:

- have perceived good health
- make plans to be active
- have low stress levels
- are able to overcome personal barriers
- have information and feedback on their activity levels.



Social factors

An individuals' social environment can affect their activity levels.

Research found that:

- support from friends and family is important
- focusing on self-improvement rather than ability will help individuals start and stay engaged with physical activity.



Workplace factors

Certain pressures in the workplace can determine adults' activity levels.

Adults are less likely to be active if they:

- have a demanding job
- work long hours
- work overtime
- have a lack of flexibility at work.