

Adults (25+) with no children

Physical activity insights

“It’s definitely more fun when you exercise with other people. And it makes you do it too, because you don’t want to let them down.”

– Female, Melbourne



This life stage is broad, comprising all Victorian adults over the age of 25 years who are not parents of dependent children or retired. Some in this life stage are yet to have children, some will never have children, and others are parents of independent (adult) children.

Despite this diversity, this group shares characteristics such as increased emotional and financial stability (compared with younger adults) and the freedom to make more deliberate choices about their lifestyle. Many are in a period of consolidation of career and financial aspirations, either to set themselves up initially, or in preparation for retirement.

- Two in five adults in this life stage (40%) are active for 30 minutes or more on at least four days per week.
- Only 13% of men and 5% of women in this segment participate in sport weekly.

This life stage snapshot is part of a set looking at levels of physical activity among Victorians. It has been developed from research commissioned by VicHealth and explores what influences Victorians to be less or more active, and what would motivate them to change their existing behaviours.

To view the other snapshots, and for more information, visit www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/lifestages

Most of the adults in this life stage who play sport also did so as children and enjoy their continued involvement. For others, a lack of interest in and enjoyment of sport is a considerable barrier, particularly for women.

Recapturing ‘youthly pursuits’ can be a motivator for men, but many are concerned that they won’t be able to participate with the same level of skill as in the past and fear letting the team down.

Adults with no children’s activity levels



‘Inactive’ = no days of 30-minute sessions of physical activity per week; ‘Somewhat active’ = 1 to 3 days of 30-minute sessions per week; ‘Active’ = 4+ days of 30-minute sessions per week.

Many in this life stage are focused on work and career and feel they are unable to make a firm commitment to turning up to every game and training. Less active people in this life stage feel that they would have to sacrifice personal time to be able to exercise.

Adults in this life stage do not dispute the health benefits of physical activity. However, there is stronger agreement about the health benefits from active adults compared to less active adults.

The cost of gyms and organised sport is a major barrier, with nearly three in five adults in this life stage considering cost a barrier, particularly inactive women.

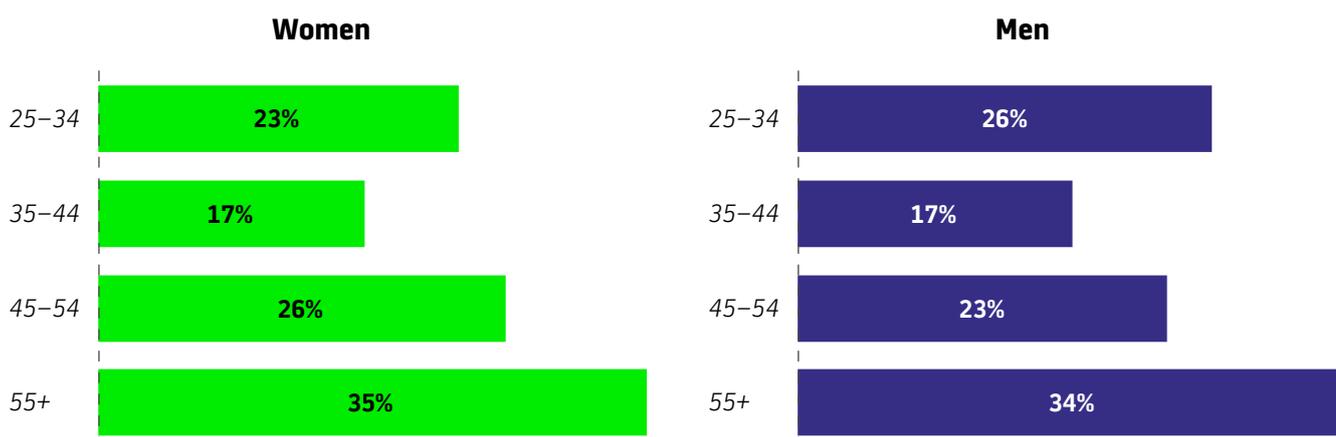
Inactive men and women in this life stage are:

- less likely to be in the workforce
- less likely to see the benefits of physical activity
- less likely to have any interest in getting active
- less likely to see a link between a good exercise routine and physical activity levels

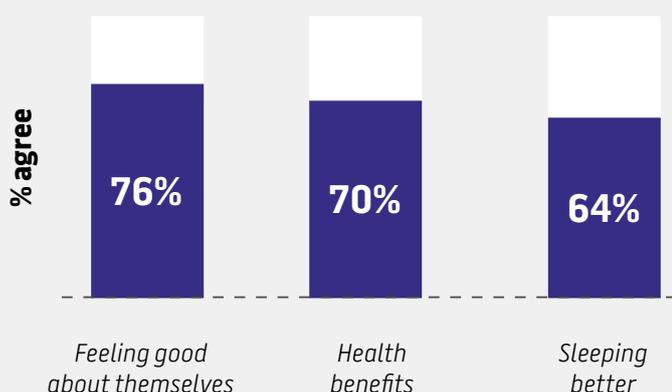
...than their more active peers.

Individuals in this life stage classified as ‘inactive’ tend to be older than their more active peers: more than a third are aged 55 and older, and the threat of injury (and its effect on movement, pain and ability to work) is a limiting factor for them.

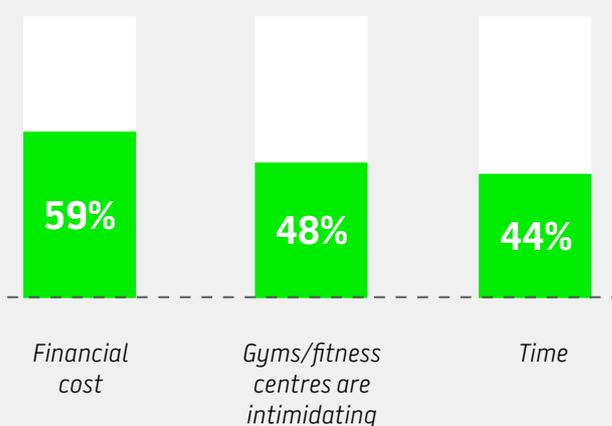
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF INACTIVE WOMEN AND MEN IN THIS LIFE STAGE



Perceived benefits of physical activity for adults without children



Barriers to physical activity for adults without children



AMONG ALL VICTORIAN ADULTS:

5% are **inactive** women with no children

5% are **inactive** men with no children

9% are **somewhat active** women with no children

9% are **somewhat active** men with no children

Focus on women

Both men and women use physical activity for weight management. For men, this is related more to feeling fit and firm, while for women it is more about how they look and feel in clothes.

activity. Women are more likely to choose walking with someone else involved and feel that social interaction makes physical activity easier and more fun.

Adults in this life stage are most likely to consider walking as a way to increase their current level of

There are significant barriers to physical activity for women in this life stage:

BARRIERS FOR WOMEN

Feel intimidated

49% of women believe that sports clubs are intimidating, with inactive and somewhat active women more likely to feel this way.

Less likely to think feeling good is benefit of physical activity

Inactive women are significantly less likely to think that feeling good about themselves will be a benefit of physical activity until they have experienced it for themselves.

Feel embarrassed exercising in public

Two in five women feel embarrassed exercising in public, particularly inactive women (56%), severely limiting the types of physical activity that are in their comfort zone.

Think they lack coordination

Many women (particularly inactive women) claim they lack coordination when it comes to physical activity.

Low household income

Inactive women are more likely to be on a low household income compared to those who are more active.

Women with no children's activity levels

INACTIVE
22%

SOMEWHAT ACTIVE
38%

ACTIVE
40%

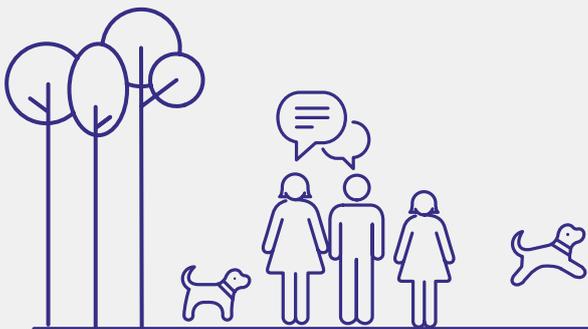
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Meet Stephanie, *an inactive adult*

Stephanie is 57 years old and is a part-time nurse. She has worked in the same general practice clinic for the past 20 years and gradually reduced her working days to three, to enable her to look after her parents.

Her partner says they should try walking to work when the weather is good, but Steph feels driving is the easiest way to get around, especially if she needs to run errands for her parents after work.

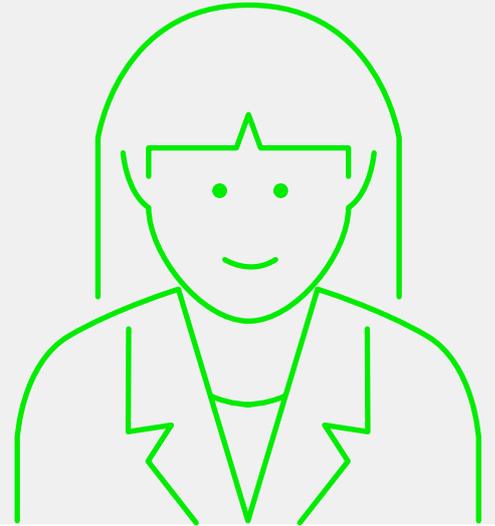


On most evenings, Steph and her partner have dinner at home and then take their dog to the park where they'll have a chat with the other owners while watching the dogs play. On some weekends, they get together with their neighbours over coffee, or invite friends for dinner. They like watching TV in their spare time and love going to support their team during the footy season.

Steph doesn't think that regular exercise would really benefit her much and she worries that she might get injured. She finds gyms intimidating anyway, and wouldn't want to get hot and sweaty in front of other people. Steph has looked into joining the local park's tai chi sessions but feels that's something for when they are older.



Meet Bianca, *a somewhat active adult*

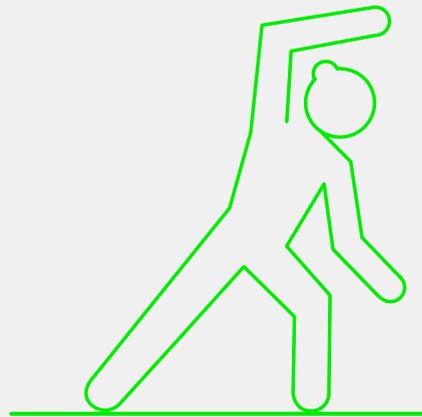


Bianca is a 35-year old who lives alone in her own apartment. Born into a second-generation Italian migrant family, she loves her family's Sunday lunch get-togethers alongside the freedom and independence of her single status.



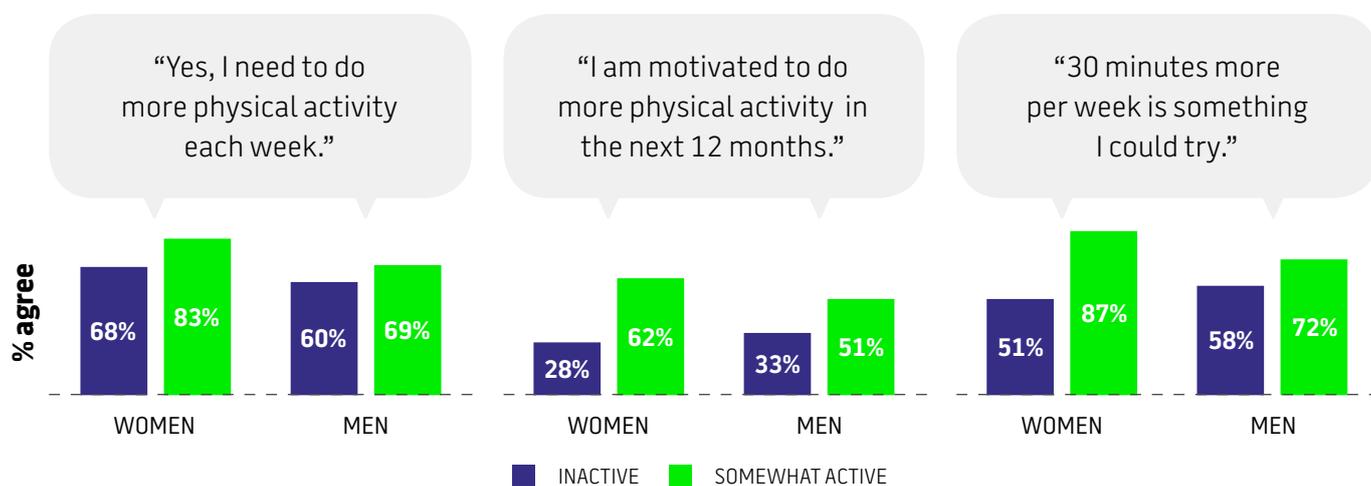
Bianca works full time as a client officer for a furniture company, a job she enjoys and is focused on. She relishes having a regular routine, including catching the train each morning and walking 10 minutes from the station to work. Sometimes she gets off a stop earlier for a longer walk, but never in the winter.

She feels that walking around the furniture shop is her main form of exercise but she and a work colleague also join a weekly lunchtime yoga session in the next building. She has little interest in playing sport and feels that many clubs are not welcoming of new people.



Bianca enjoys her social time after work. Having had a stable job and income means she can spend a bit more on going out, after setting aside money for regular payments. Saturdays are spent on some housework, shopping, babysitting her nephews or going to the movies with her best friend. Sundays are for visiting her parents and helping to prepare the food for family lunch.

Are less active adults with no children ready to do more physical activity?



Trigger points for adults with no children

Triggers for increasing physical activity will be most successful at times of change, when Victorians are reflecting on their life. For adults with no children, these times include:

-  Change in employment
-  New relationship
-  Changes in relationships
-  Moving house
-  Seasons/weather

How should we talk to adults with no children about being physically active?

- Introduce and reinforce the notion of planning and routine.
- Raise awareness of options for being active – i.e. different types of activity and what's available locally.
- Highlight the recognised benefits – feeling good, weight management (especially for women) and feeling fit (especially for men).
- Reinforce the social aspects of being active, especially for women.

While 63% of inactive women in this segment are daily users of social media, only 35% of their male counterparts are.



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