

GLOBAL NCD TARGET

REDUCE PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

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Background

Heart disease and stroke, cancers, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases and other noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) cause tens of millions of deaths per year, the majority of which occur during the most productive years of life. NCDs reduce economic output and prevent people around the world from living lives of health and wellbeing. Creating the conditions that favour sustainable development means taking action to prevent and control NCDs now.

Nine global NCD targets provide a vision for progress by 2025. The WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020 and other resources provide a roadmap of policies and interventions to realise this vision. When implemented, they will put countries on track to meet the commitments made on NCDs at the United Nations General Assembly in 2011 and 2014, and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including target 3.4 to reduce premature NCD deaths.

Global Target

A 10% relative reduction in the prevalence of insufficient physical activity by 2025.

Fast Facts

- One in four adults and more than 80% of the adolescent population around the world are not physically active enough.
- Insufficient physical activity is one of the 10 leading risk factors for global deaths, causing 3.2 million deaths each year.
- Urbanization, fear of violence, high-density traffic, and pollution can discourage people from becoming more physically active.
- Adults should engage in at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.
- Children and adolescents aged 5-17 need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day to improve and maintain physical and mental health.

Priority Actions

Meeting this target is possible. Shifts in physical activity patterns, including changes in transportation methods and modes of work, have led to an increase in physical inactivity levels globally. The WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health and the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020 provide guidance for attaining the physical inactivity target. Partnerships between government and civil society will be key to supporting policy implementation. Focusing on the following policy measures will help achieve this target:

- Adopt and implement national guidelines on physical activity for health.
- Conduct evidence-informed campaigns through mass and social media, at the national and community level, to inform and motivate adults and young people about the benefits of physical activity and other healthy behaviours.
- Develop policy measures in cooperation with relevant sectors to promote physical activity through activities of daily living, including through “active transport,” recreation, leisure and sport.
- Promote community involvement in local actions aimed at increasing physical activity.
- Create surveillance systems that evaluate actions aimed at increasing physical activity, so as to contribute to an evidence base of effective and cost-effective actions.