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**Australian Health Survey:
Physical Activity 2011-12**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australians spend one month a year sitting watching TV

Australian adults spend on average four hours per day doing sedentary leisure activities such as watching television compared with only half an hour of physical activity, according to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today.

Dr Paul Jelfs, from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, said the 2011-12 data reveals a tendency for high levels of sedentary behaviour across the adult population.

Leisure

"Australian adults spent an average of 13 hours a week watching TV. While males and females spent a similar number of hours sitting to watch TV, males spent around 45 minutes more per week using the computer (5.5 compared to 4.8 hours) and 40 minutes more playing electronic games (one hour compared to 18 minutes)," Dr Jelfs said.

"It all adds up, with men and women spending over two months of each year on sedentary leisure activities (65 days for men and 61 days for women per year) including sitting for transport.

At work

"One in three workers spent at least three-quarters of their time at work sitting. Managers, professionals and clerical/administrative workers spent an average of 22 to 23 hours per week sitting compared to less than four hours for labourers. Working adults also averaged six hours per week sitting for transport.

"Some adults that sit more may try to compensate for this by exercising more. For example, working adults in households with incomes in the top 20 per cent spent more time (30.4 hours compared to 19.5 hours per week) sitting for work and transport but spent more time exercising - an average of 4.7 hours compared to 3.5 hours for other workers.

"This survey, using a pedometer, confirmed the sedentary nature of most people's days, with only one in five adults (19 per cent) reaching the recommended 10,000 steps per day. By this measure, those aged 35 to 44 were the most active adults taking an average of 8,219 steps per day," Dr Jelfs said.

Further information can be found in [Australian Health Survey: Physical Activity](#) (cat. no. 4364.0.55.004), available for free download from the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au).

Media note:

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