

# Wellbeing and lifestyle – the evidence 2006

## Eastern Region

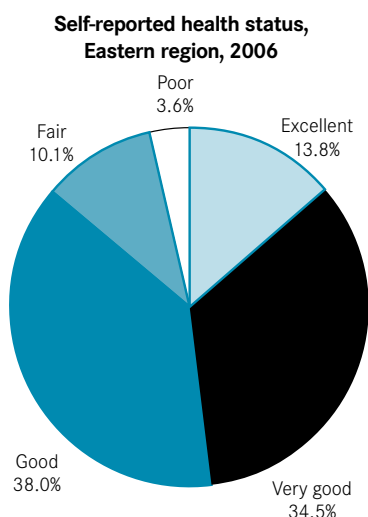
The Victorian Population Health Survey is an annual statewide survey that the Department of Human Services (Health Intelligence Unit, Public Health) undertakes to collect a wide range of information on the health of the adult Victorian population (18 years or more).

This fact sheet presents major findings from the 2006 survey in the department's Eastern region. More information on the results of the survey are available at:

[www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/vphs.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/vphs.htm)

### Health status

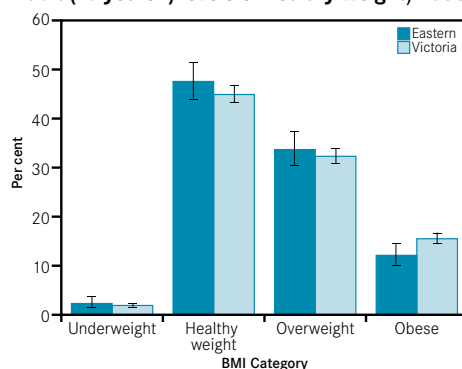
Self-rated health has been shown to be an excellent indicator of health status. When asked about their health, 86% of all adults in the region rate their health as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good', compared to 14% who rate their health as 'fair' or 'poor'.



### Levels of healthy weight

The body mass index (BMI) is a measure of overweight/obesity using a person's weight in relation to their height. In 2006, 34% of adults from the region were overweight and 12% were obese, similar to results for Victoria.

**Adult (18 years+) levels of healthy weight, 2006**



### Nutrition and physical activity

In 2006, females from the region were significantly<sup>1</sup> more likely to meet the dietary guidelines<sup>2</sup> for fruit (2 or more serves) and vegetable intake (5 or more serves) than males (fruit: 60% females vs 40% males; vegetables: 15% females vs 7% males).

More than two-thirds of adult males (69%) from the region met the physical activity guidelines<sup>3</sup> (sufficient time and sessions). Although this was higher than the rate for Victorian males (65%) and higher than the rate for females (64%) in the region, these differences were not significant.

**Fruit & vegetable consumption & levels of physical activity, 2006**

		Eastern				Victoria			
		Males		Females		Males		Females	
		(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI
<b>Daily vegetable consumption</b>	None	3.3	1.9-5.5	3.7	2.3-5.8	5.1	4.1-6.5	3.9	3.2-4.8
	1-2 serves	67.3	61.3-72.7	40.3	36.0-44.7	64.4	62.0-66.9	44.5	42.6-46.5
	3-4 serves	22.6	18.2-27.6	40.2	35.9-44.6	22.5	20.5-24.6	37.5	35.6-39.4
	5 or more serves	6.6	3.5-11.9	14.7	11.9-18.1	6.6	5.3-8.1	13.1	11.9-14.5
<b>Daily fruit consumption</b>	None	17.9	13.6-23.1	8.7	6.5-11.7	20.3	18.4-22.4	11.1	9.9-12.4
	1 serve	41.6	35.9-47.5	31.1	27.1-35.3	38.8	36.3-41.3	34.0	32.1-35.9
	2 or more serves	40.2	34.5-46.3	59.8	55.4-64.1	39.8	37.3-42.3	53.8	51.9-55.9
<b>Physical activity levels</b>	Sedentary	6.3	4.1-9.5	6.5	4.7-9.1	4.6	3.7-5.7	5.4	4.6-6.4
	Insufficient time & sessions	23.0	18.7-28.0	25.9	22.2-29.9	27.1	24.9-29.4	28.1	26.4-29.9
	Sufficient time & sessions	68.8	63.4-73.8	64.3	60.0-68.4	64.5	62.1-66.9	63.7	61.8-65.6

Note: The *Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults* recommend five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit daily for adults, to ensure a healthy diet & the *National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians* recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most, preferably all days (DoHAC 1999, NHMRC 2003).

1 Statistical significance has been determined by comparing 95% confidence intervals between estimates. Significance has been identified where confidence intervals do not overlap.  
 2 NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) 2003, *Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults*, Ausinfo, Canberra.  
 3 DoHAC (Department of Health and Aged Care) 1999, *National Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults*, DoHAC, Canberra.

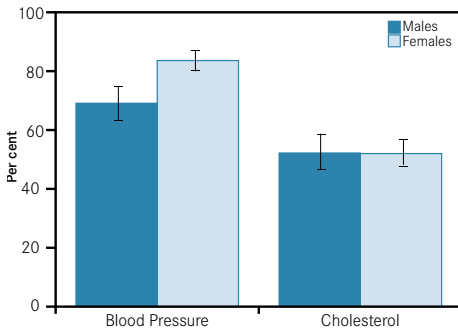




## Health checks

The survey collected information on screening tests performed to detect the presence of risk factors for the development of heart disease. Females from the region were significantly more likely to have had a blood pressure check than males (84% vs 69%). The difference between males (52%) and females (52%) in the region for blood cholesterol checks was not significant.

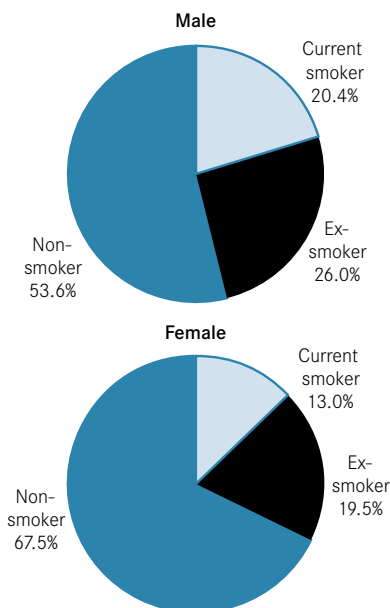
Had a health check in the last two years, by sex, Eastern region,



## Smoking status

Current smokers are defined as those who smoke daily or occasionally. Females from the region were significantly less likely to be current smokers than females from Victoria (13% Eastern, 19% Victoria). Males from the region were also less likely to be current smokers (20%), compared to their Victorian counterparts (23%), however this latter difference was not significant.

Smoking status, by sex, Eastern region, 2006



## Eye protection

In 2006, males from the region were significantly more likely to wear a hat when going out in the sun compared to females (58% vs 45%). However, females (80%) in the region were significantly more likely to report usually wearing sunglasses when out in the sun than males (62%).

Adult (18 years+) sun protection, 2006

Sun protection		Eastern				Victoria			
		Males		Females		Males		Females	
		(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI	(%)	95%CI
Usually wear a hat		58.0	51.8-63.9	44.5	40.2-48.9	63.1	60.5-65.7	44.2	42.3-46.2
	Usually wear sunglasses	61.5	55.3-67.3	79.8	76.0-83.2	66.3	63.8-68.7	79.6	77.9-81.1

## Alcohol consumption

The *Australian Alcohol Guidelines*<sup>4</sup> specify the risks for various drinking levels for males and females in the short and long-term (NHMRC 2001).

The rate of alcohol consumption on a weekly basis, at a level for short-term risk of harm, was significantly higher for males (13%) from the region than the rate for females (5%). Differences in the rates between males and females from the region were not significant for long-term health risks associated with risky and high-risk levels of alcohol consumption. Females (20%) from the region were significantly more likely than males (12%) to be abstainers (never/no longer consume alcohol).

Short-term risk of alcohol related harm, 2006

		Low Risk		Risky or High Risk					
				At least Yearly		At least Monthly		At least Weekly	
		%	95%CI	%	95%CI	%	95%CI	%	95%CI
Eastern	Males	31.6	26.6-37.0	27.1	21.6-33.3	16.6	12.8-21.2	12.5	9.0-17.2
	Females	42.8	38.5-47.2	22.3	18.7-26.2	9.6	7.2-12.7	5.1	3.3-7.8
Victoria	Males	31.3	29.1-33.6	25.5	23.2-27.9	15.9	14.1-17.9	14.7	12.9-16.7
	Females	40.4	38.5-42.4	21.4	19.8-23.1	9.6	8.5-10.9	6.1	5.2-7.2

Long-term risk of alcohol related harm, 2006

		Low Risk		Risky		High Risk		Abstainer	
		%	95%CI	%	95%CI	%	95%CI	%	95%CI
Eastern	Males	81.0	75.9-85.2	5.9	3.5-9.7	0.8	0.3-2.6	11.7	8.5-15.8
	Females	76.2	72.2-79.8	2.7	1.6-4.6	0.9	0.3-2.7	20.0	16.7-23.7
Victoria	Males	82.2	80.2-84.0	3.8	2.9-4.9	1.2	0.8-1.8	12.0	10.5-13.8
	Females	73.7	71.9-75.4	2.9	2.3-3.6	0.7	0.4-1.3	21.9	20.3-23.7

4 NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) 2001, *Australian Alcohol Guidelines: Health Risks and Benefits*, Ausinfo, Canberra.