

Victorian Population Health Survey 2010

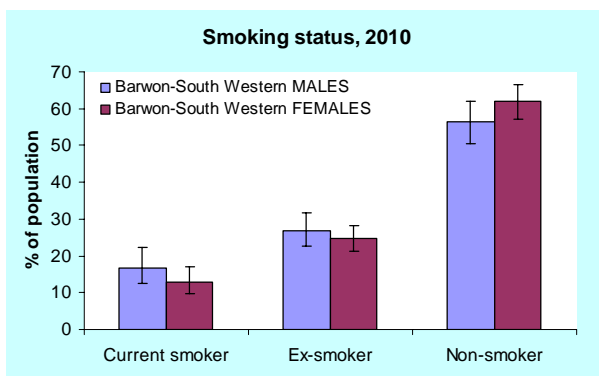
Barwon-South Western Region - selected findings

Barwon-South Western Region is located in the south-west of Victoria and its estimated resident population, as of 2010, was 378,724¹ with adults comprising 77.0% of the population, compared to 77.8% for Victoria¹. More than one-third of the residents (35.5%) were aged 50 years or older, compared to 31.4% for Victoria. Female life expectancy at birth in 2007 was 84.0 years, which was similar² to the Victorian figure of 84.4 years, however, male life expectancy at birth in 2007 was 79.4 years, lower than the Victorian figure of 80.3 years³.

The Victorian Population Health Survey is an annual state-wide survey that the Department of Health undertakes to collect information on the health of the adult Victorian population (18 years or older).

Smoking status

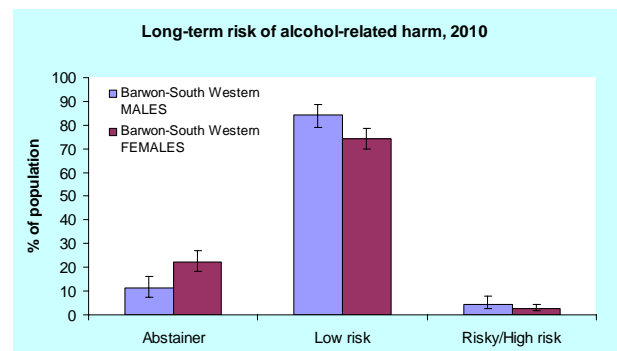
Current smokers are defined as those who smoke daily or occasionally. Smoking patterns between the Region and Victoria were similar⁴. In 2010, 16.7% of males and 13.0% of females in the Region were classified as current smokers, similar to Victorian males and females (17.8% and 15.8% respectively).



Alcohol consumption⁵

The *Australian Alcohol Guidelines*⁶ specify the risks of long-term alcohol-related harm by level of alcohol consumption in males and females.

The patterns of alcohol consumption were similar between the Region and Victoria overall and between males and females in the Region. In 2010, 4.4% of males and 2.8% of females in the Region consumed alcohol at risky or high risk levels for long-term harm, similar to Victorian males and females (3.3% and 3.0% respectively).



Overweight and obesity

Being overweight or obese is an important risk factor for developing type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, certain cancers, sleep apnoea and osteoarthritis. It is typically measured by calculating a person's Body Mass Index (BMI), which is their weight in relation to their height^{7,8}.

In 2010, 39.0% of males in Barwon-South Western Region were overweight, whilst 21.5% were obese, similar to Victorian males (41.0% and 18.5% respectively). More than one in four females in the Region (27.0%) were overweight, similar to Victorian females (25.7%), whilst 18.7% of females in the Region were obese, similar to Victorian females (15.2%). Males in the Region were also more likely to be overweight compared with their female counterparts.

¹ Service Planning, Department of Health (DH).

² Region estimates are considered to be higher or lower than the Victorian estimate based on statistical significance, determined by comparing the 95% confidence intervals (CI) between estimates. Where the 95% CI of estimates do not overlap there is strong evidence that the estimates are different. Where they overlap, the estimates are deemed to be similar.

³ Health Intelligence Unit, DH.

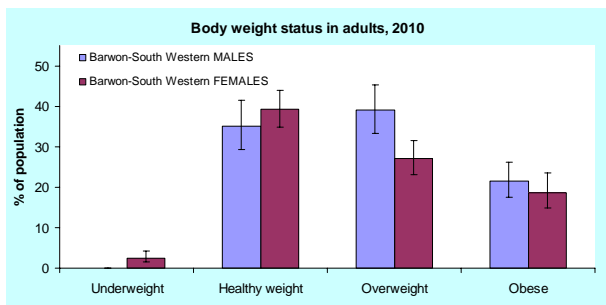
⁴ Estimates are age-standardised to the 2006 Victorian population.

⁵ The 2010 VPHS survey questions on alcohol consumption assessed the risks of alcohol-related harm based on the 2001 Australian Alcohol Guidelines.

⁶ NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) 2001.

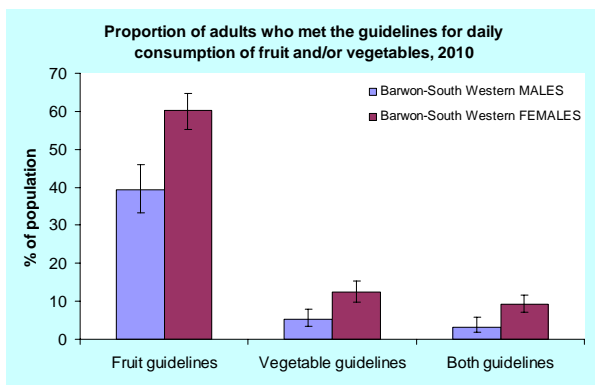
⁷ Based on self-reported weight and height.

⁸ BMI Reference: WHO 2000, *Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic*, WHO Technical Report Series 894, World Health Organisation (WHO), Geneva.



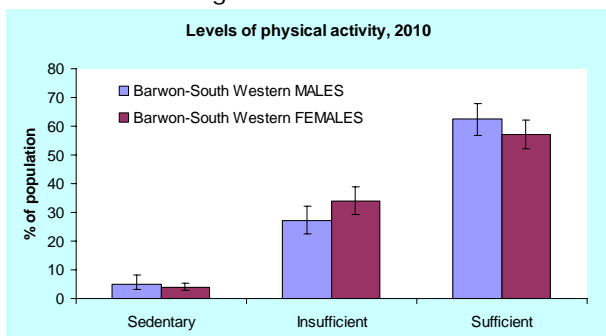
Nutrition

In 2010, 5.2% of males and 12.3% of females in the Region met the dietary guidelines⁹ for vegetable consumption, similar to Victorian males and females (5.2% and 10.0% respectively). Almost four in 10 males (39.4%) and 60.1% of females in the Region met the dietary guidelines for fruit consumption, similar to Victorian males and females (45.1% and 54.5% respectively). Females in the Region were also more likely to meet the dietary guidelines for consumption of fruit, vegetables and combined fruit and vegetables compared with males.



Physical Activity

In 2010, 62.5% of males and 57.3% of females in the Region met the physical activity guidelines¹⁰, similar to Victorian males and females (61.2% and 57.1% respectively). There were no differences in physical activity levels between the Region and Victoria overall or between males and females in the Region.



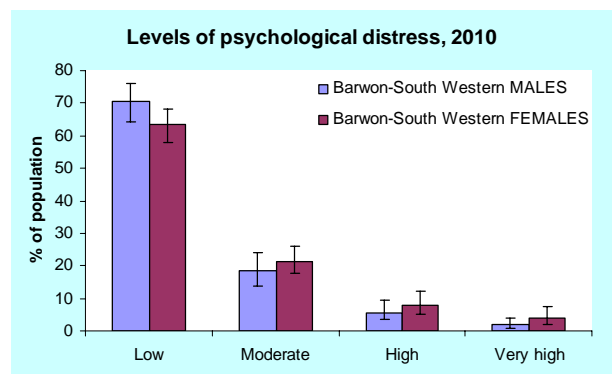
⁹ The **Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults** recommend five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit daily for adults, aged 19 years and older, to ensure a healthy diet. NHMRC 2003. For persons aged 12 to 18 years, the recommendations are for three serves of vegetables and three serves of fruit.

¹⁰ The **National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians** recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most, preferably all days in persons aged 19 years and over. DoHAC (Department of Health and Aged Care) 1999, Canberra.

Psychological distress

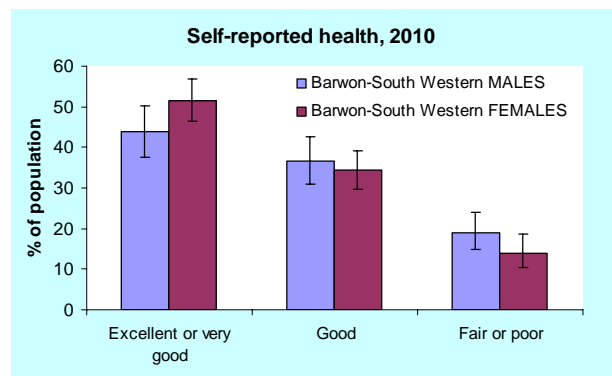
Poor mental health is a significant risk factor for poor health outcomes. The Kessler 10 (K10) scale is a measure of the level of psychological distress that an individual has experienced in the preceding four weeks, which in turn is a risk factor for poor mental health¹¹.

In 2010, 70.5% of males and 63.3% of females in the Region experienced low levels of psychological distress, similar to Victorian males and females (68.9% and 59.9% respectively). There were no differences in psychological distress levels between the Region and Victoria for either males or females.



Self-reported health

In 2010, 43.8% of males and 51.5% of females in the Region reported their health as excellent or very good, similar to Victorian males and females (45.2% and 46.8% respectively). There were no differences between the Region and Victoria, or between males and females in self-reported health status.



This fact sheet presents selected key findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2010. The full report of the Victorian Population Health Survey 2010 is at <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/survey/vphs.htm>

¹¹ The Kessler 10 is a set of 10 questions designed to categorise the level of psychological distress over a four week period and has been validated as a simple measure of anxiety, depression, and worry (psychological distress).