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Most Scots active through DIY, gardening and walking... not sport

Nearly two-thirds of adults in Scotland are meeting national physical activity guidelines in their spare time, the vast majority without playing any sport, research shows.

Walking and domestic activities such as housework, DIY and gardening accounted for more than half of the leisure time total for men and women who did more than the recommended 150 minutes of activity a week.

Team and individual sport made only a small contribution among those who met the guidelines – 15 per cent of activity time among men and less than four per cent for women.

Among the 64 per cent of adults who met the guidelines, the time spent being active did not decrease significantly between younger and older age groups, researchers found.

Although the proportion of people meeting the threshold decreased with age – around 80 per cent of 16-24 year-olds are sufficiently active compared with less than half of over-65s – people who stayed active in older age did as much leisure time activity as younger people.

The average active 65 year old and the average active 30 year old both do more than 700 minutes of activity a week.

Among those who did not meet the guidelines, domestic activity accounted for most of the activity across all age groups.

Experts from the University's Institute of Sport, Physical Education & Health Sciences and the University of Oxford analysed data from the 2013 Scottish Health Survey, which featured nearly 5000 adults.

Tessa Strain of the University's Physical Activity Health Research Centre (PAHRC) said: "These findings show that you can meet the recommended amount of physical activity by everyday activities such as walking. This is good news for those without the competitive inclination to step onto a sports field, pitch or court or for those who feel that gyms are not for them."

The paper, *Age-related comparisons by sex in the domains of aerobic physical activity for adults in Scotland*, is published in the journal *Preventive Medicine Reports* (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211335515001850>)

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