

# CARVER COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROFILE

## Physical Activity and Active Living



Being physically active is one of the most important actions that people of all ages can take to maintain and improve their health. It can make people feel better, function better, sleep better and reduce the risk of a large number of chronic diseases. This includes heart disease and stroke, several forms of cancer, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, weight gain, and type two diabetes. Other benefits include reduced anxiety, dementia, depression, and risk of falls. While the more one is active the greater the benefits, even short episodes of physical activity are beneficial. This is true for the development of very young children and adolescents, as well as adults, older adults, pregnant and postpartum women, and those with chronic health conditions and disabilities.

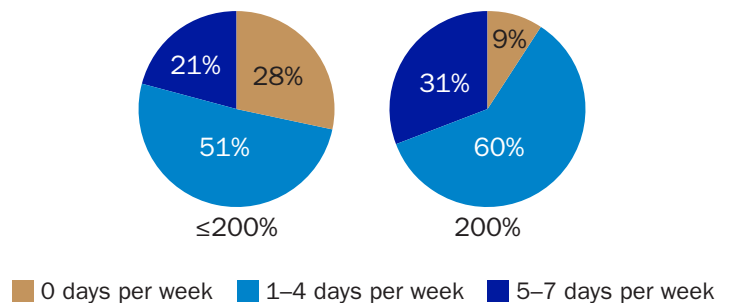
Children should get at least an hour of exercise a day, while adults should get regular exercise throughout the week. Even a couple of hours of moderate physical activity per week can add quality and length to our lives.

30% of Carver County residents are engaging in three days of vigorous exercise or five days of moderate exercise a week. Only 14% of Carver County adults report not having any leisure time physical activity in the past month.

### Poverty and Physical Activity

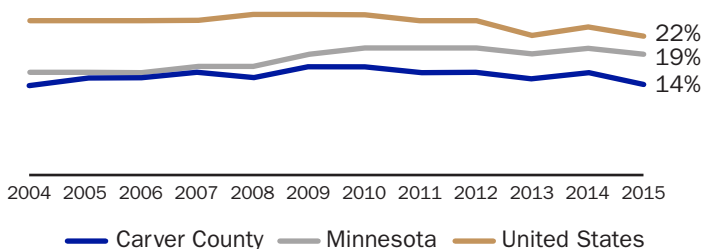
Low income populations often live in less desirable neighborhoods close to industries and near busy roads and freeways (which serve people who own cars and live in areas further out). Heavy traffic can limit opportunities for walking and physical activity, and can be a safety hazard. Residents of high traffic areas also are exposed to more noise and air pollution. Nearly 30% of Carver County adults living in poverty reported not having any physical activity in the last week compared to 10% of those living above 200% of the federal poverty level.

#### Moderate Exercise in Carver County Adults by Federal Poverty Level Percentage



Source: Carver County Adult Health Survey, 2018

#### Percent of Adults Not Physically Active



Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings, 2018



## Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation is good for the mind, body and spirit. Carver County is rich in parks and trails, creating many opportunities to get outside, alone or with friends and family. Access to parks and safe places for outdoor recreation contribute to our physical and mental well-being.

White Minnesotans are twice as likely to use regional parks and trails and rarely note safety concerns while populations of color are more likely to note safety concerns about being in regional parks. In Carver County, those that reported their neighborhood as a fair or poor place to live were twice as likely to report not participating in physical activity in the last month compared to those who reported their neighborhood as a good or excellent place to live.



## References

Minnesota Department of Health. (2017). 2017 Minnesota Statewide Health Assessment. Produced in collaboration with the Healthy Minnesota Partnership. St. Paul, MN. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/healthymnpartnership/docs/2017MNStatewideHealthAssessment.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Health. (2019). Physical Activity Basics. Available at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/physicalactivity/pabasics.html>

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**Carver County Public Health**  
600 Fourth Street East  
Chaska, MN 55318-2102



Phone (952) 361-1329  
Fax (952) 361-1360  
[public-health@co.carver.mn.us](mailto:public-health@co.carver.mn.us)  
[www.co.carver.mn.us](http://www.co.carver.mn.us)

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