



HCHS/SOL Question by Question Instructions Physical Activity Form (PAE/PAS), Version A

General Instructions

The Physical Activity questionnaire provides an overall assessment of the physical activity level of the participant and provides information regarding which activities are generally completed. This modified version of Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ) comprises four parts of the original GPAQ. The purpose of the questionnaire is to provide common instruments that can be used to obtain internationally comparable data on health-related physical activity. Although the original GPAQ could be self-administered or administered by telephone, an interviewer will be used for the HCHS/SOL.

Background on GPAQ

Physical activity is a major independent modifiable risk factor which has a protective effect for cardiovascular disease, ischaemic stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon cancer, and breast cancer and is also associated with other important health outcomes including mental health, injuries, falls, and obesity.

Surveillance of population levels of physical activity levels using a standardized protocol is an important and necessary part of a public health response to current concerns regarding physical activity levels. Surveillance of physical activity in populations groups is most often undertaken using a self-reported questionnaire as these are relatively inexpensive and relatively easy to administer compared to objective measurement techniques. However, until recently less than a handful of countries regularly collected robust data on physical activity to monitor trends over time. This is at least partly due to the lack of consensus on what measurement instrument should be used.

Given the increased global interest in the role of physical activity to prevent chronic disease, and the lack of data that is useful both to inform within-country public health efforts, and for inter-country comparisons, the WHO developed a Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ) for physical activity surveillance in developing countries. The GPAQ has undergone a research program which shows that it is valid and reliable but also adaptable to incorporate cultural and other differences. For more information see: <http://www.who.int/chp/steps/GPAQ/en/index.html>.

Using GPAQ

The GPAQ as used by the HCHS/SOL has four parts and focuses on habitual activities. The first part focuses on work-related physical activities. The responses to this part examine both moderate and vigorous activities. The second part focuses on walking or bicycling for transportation. The third part examines leisure or recreational activities and like the work-related PA part, the responses to this part are divided in moderate and vigorous activities. The fourth part is on sedentary behaviors, asking the participant to estimate hours and minutes sedentary behaviors, but does not include time spent sleeping.

The GPAQ form includes the questions as well as interviewer clarification and interviewer prompts to help in the administration of the questionnaire. Each section has question(s) regarding time spent doing the activity on a typical day when the activity is done. This may be difficult for the participant to recall.

Attempt to “force” an answer for all questions, but if this fails record the response meaning “don’t know/refused” by inserting equals sign(s) (=) into all fields. For example, for a time response one would record “ Hr Min” and for number of days use “ Days a week”.

The section on “leisure/recreational” includes questions regarding specific vigorous and moderate intensity physical activities. If the participant answers “yes” to participation in these types of activities, the interviewer reads the list of activities and the participant chooses all that apply to her/him. There is also an “other” category and the interviewer writes in the activity on the blank.

Question by Question Instructions

Q1 This question asks about vigorous intensity activity at work. Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time. For example, carrying bundles of roofing shingles up a ladder, chopping wood, shoveling gravel or sand are vigorous activity, but would only be reported if the activity is carried out for 10 minutes or more and not if the participant simply carried the bundle one time.

Interviewer can also clarify that work includes paid and unpaid work as well as course work and volunteer work unrelated to the person’s home. For example building a bookshelf for you own use at home would not be considered in this category, but building the bookshelf for a church would be considered volunteer work. Examples of unpaid work (volunteer work) could be building houses for Habitat for Humanity, yard maintenance for a church, officiating local soccer games. Work does not include housework around the participant’s own house or apartment or getting to and from work.

Q2 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Q3 The question is seeking the amount of activity that the participant engages in on a typical day when he/she is active and during a typical week. If the participant has trouble answering this question, he/she can be prompted to recall his/her previous week’s activity so long as they also confirm that the previous week is representative of his/her normal week of activity. The time must be entered as number of hours (0-24) plus minutes (0-59). Thus, if the response is “about a half an hour”, the entry is 00 Hr 30 Min. A response of “65 minutes” would be entered as 01 Hr 05 Min. Note the use of leading zeroes. An entry of less than 00 Hr 10 Min is not allowed. If the participant replies “none” or “less than 10 minutes” or gives a time less than 10 minutes, enter 00 Hr 00 Min.

Q4 This question asks about moderate-intensity activity at work. Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time. Examples of moderate-intensity work include landscaping, carpentry, and plumbing.

Interviewer can also clarify that work includes paid and unpaid work as well as course work and volunteer work. Work does not include housework around the participant’s own house or apartment.

Q5 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

- Q6 The question is seeking the amount of activity that the participant engages in on a typical day when he/she is active and during a typical week. If the participant has trouble answering this question, he/she can be prompted to recall his/her previous week's activity so long as they also confirm that the previous week is representative of his/her normal week of activity. See Q3 instructions for entry of time. Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- Q7 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers only to the walking or bicycling that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time to get to and from work places. Work place includes both paid and volunteer work.
- Q8 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers only to the walking the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- Q9 The question is seeking the amount of time spent walking or bicycling for transportation that the participant engages in on a typical day when he/she walks or cycles during a typical week. If the participant has trouble answering this question, he/she can be prompted to recall his/her previous week's walking or cycling activity following confirmation that the previous week is representative of his/her normal week of walking or cycling. See Q3 instructions for entry of time.

Interviewer should clarify that the question refers only to the walking the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

- Q10 Interviewer should clarify that vigorous intensity physical activities make a person breathe much harder than normal. If the participant still does not understand the concept of vigorous activity, then other examples can be obtained from Q11.
- Q11 The interviewer should ask the participant to signify which of the following list of vigorous activities he/she does. If weight lifting is chosen, then be sure the person understands this is hard intense weight training, usually completed daily for an hour or more, and not a simple fitness weight training program. The fitness-type of weight training is classified as moderate. If volleyball is chosen, probe to be sure this is competitive volleyball (either indoor or outdoor) and not simply a group of individuals getting together to "hit the ball around". Also, lap swimming should be "hard", like the person is training for competition.
- Q12 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those vigorous physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- Q13 The question is seeking the amount of activity that the participant engages in on a typical day when he/she is vigorously active and during a typical week. If the participant has trouble answering this question, he/she can be prompted to recall his/her previous week's activity so long as they also confirm that the previous week is representative of his/her normal week of vigorous activity. See Q3 instructions for entry of time.

Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Q14 Interviewer should clarify that moderate intensity physical activities make a person breathe somewhat harder than normal, but not like vigorous intensity physical activities.

If the participant still does not understand the concept of moderate activity, then other examples can be obtained from Q15.

Q15 The interviewer should ask the participant to signify which of the following list of moderate intensity activities he/she does. If weight training is chosen, then be sure the person understands this refers to a simple fitness weight training program, usually completed 2-3 times a week for about 30-45 minutes. Any type of hard, intense weight training is classified as vigorous. Moderate-intensity volleyball does not include competitive volleyball and moderate-intensity lap swimming does not include competition.

Q16 Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Q17 The question is seeking the amount of activity that the participant engages in on a typical day when he/she is moderately active and during a typical week. If the participant has trouble answering this question, he/she can be prompted to recall his/her previous week's activity so long as they also confirm that the previous week is representative of his/her normal week of moderate activity. See Q3 instructions for entry of time.

Interviewer should clarify that the question refers to those physical activities that the participant does for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Q18 Interviewer should clarify that participant should include time spent lying down (awake) as well as time spent sitting. The instructions for entry of time are as in Q.3 except that there is no exclusion of values less than 00 Hr 10 Min.

An average time per day is being sought. If the participant cannot answer because the pattern of time spent sitting varies widely from day to day, ask: "If this past week is typical of your usual patterns, how much time in total did you spend sitting on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday?". Then, total the number of hours and minutes up and divide by seven.

Saturday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Sunday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Monday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Tuesday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Wednesday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Thursday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Friday	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Total	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.
Total / 7	_____ Hr.	_____ Min.

Definitions

Work: includes both paid and unpaid work, volunteer work, study/training, household chores, farming and harvesting food/crops, fishing or hunting for food, seeking employment, and any other unpaid work that you do outside your home. Work does not include unpaid work completed around the home, like housework, yard work, general maintenance, and caring for your family.

Transportation: The usual way the participant travels to and from the work place, shopping, to market, to place of worship. The focus is on walking and bicycling, and does not include walking or bicycling for leisure, or motorized transport.

Leisure/Recreational Activities: These activities include sports, fitness, individual activities (walking and cycling), and other activities completed for fun or health. Activities completed as part of work or transport, are not included.

Vigorous Physical Activity: Physical activities of high intensity; greater than 6 METs. Participation in these activities results in high heart rates and breathing rates. The participant is usually aware of her/his heart rate (can usually feel the heart pounding) or breathing, and typically cannot carry on a normal conversation while participating at this intensity. The participant usually tires from these activities in as little as 5-10 minutes, or can sustain these activities for 30 minutes or more if physically trained. These may include things like heavy lifting, climbing up stairs, running, or soccer.

Moderate Physical Activity: Physical activities of 3 to 6 METs. These make the participant breathe somewhat harder than normal. These activities can be typically completed with the participant being able to complete an active conversation. Moderate intensity activities may include activities like carrying light loads, brisk walking or cycling, dance, or weightlifting.

Sedentary Behaviors: These behaviors include sitting or reclining at work, at home, getting to and from places, or with friends including time spent (sitting at a desk, sitting with friends, traveling in a car, bus, train, reading, playing cards, watching television, movies or videos), but do not include time spent sleeping.