




Walking With Purpose

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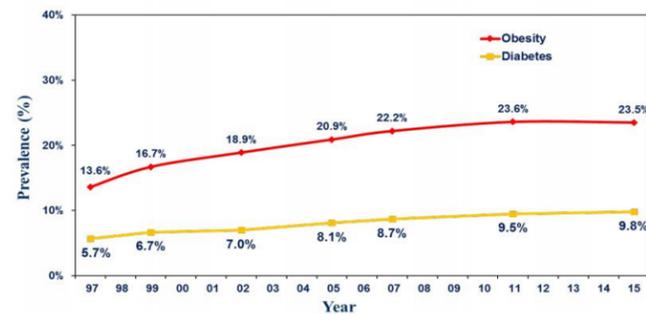
Los Angeles Walks is a non-profit organization based in the heart of Downtown, Los Angeles. In order to increase opportunities for physical activity, the 'Walking With Purpose' module was created. The purpose of this training is to increase walking behaviors for community members by implementing the Golden Circle approach of 'why, how, and what'. This was tailored towards built environments that do not offer accessible sidewalks.



The culture of Los Angeles is a vehicle dependent one, so individuals have become less physically active. Active transportation is not the main method of transit because the built environment of Los Angeles favors vehicle transportation. Los Angeles Walks wishes to change that norm by advocating for a more accessible and safer infrastructure by shifting the current vehicle transit into a more walkable built environment.

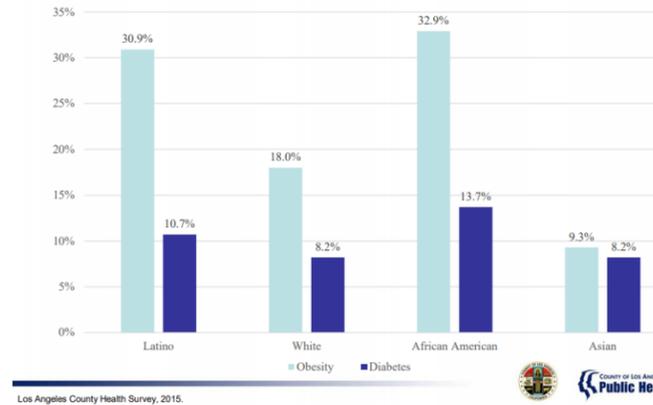
In 2015, a health survey done by the Department of Public Health revealed that 1-in-10 people residing in Los Angeles had diabetes and 1-in-4 people were obese. From the year 1997 - 2015, the prevalence of diabetes and obesity has nearly doubled in Los Angeles County. Type-2 diabetes is a component of metabolic syndrome and is a major public health issue that affects millions of people.

Prevalence of Obesity and Diabetes Among Adults in Los Angeles County, 1997-2015



Source: Los Angeles County Health Survey, Department of Public Health

Prevalence of Obesity and Diabetes Among Adults, by Race/Ethnicity, LA County, 2015



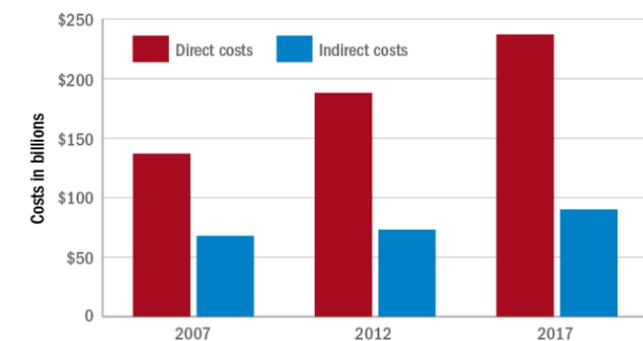
Los Angeles County Health Survey, 2015.

By increasing opportunities for physical activity, the prevalence of metabolic syndrome such as heart disease, obesity, and type-2 diabetes can be prevented and managed with a walking regimen at a moderate intensity. Walking With Purpose aims to improve the health and the economy of Los Angeles by increasing the opportunities to walk, especially for demographics living in low socioeconomic status areas.

Walking is the most common form of 'moderate' physical activity and can be done with little-to-no cost. Walking at a moderate intensity may help reduce and manage the risk of metabolic syndrome. To gain the health benefits from walking, the rate of perceived exertion (RPE) is a tool used to measure an individual's relative intensity for physical activity, walking in this case. Ideally, walking at a moderate intensity should be between the ranges of 2-4 on the RPE scale.

RPE SCALE	RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION
10 /	MAX EFFORT ACTIVITY Feels almost impossible to keep going. Completely out of breath, unable to talk. Cannot maintain for more than a very short time
9 /	VERY HARD ACTIVITY Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely breathe and speak only a few words
7-8 /	VIGOROUS ACTIVITY Borderline uncomfortable. Short of breath, can speak a sentence
4-6 /	MODERATE ACTIVITY Breathing heavily, can hold a short conversation. Still somewhat comfortable, but becoming noticeably more challenging
2-3 /	LIGHT ACTIVITY Feels like you can maintain for hours. Easy to breathe and carry a conversation
1 /	VERY LIGHT ACTIVITY Hardly any exertion, but more than sleeping, watching TV, etc

Total direct and indirect medical costs of diabetes



Note: All cost estimates extrapolated to the 2017 U.S. population and adjusted to 2017 dollars. Source: Diabetes Care. 2018 Mar 22. doi: 10.2337/dci18-0007

The rising cost of healthcare can be regressed with a healthy regimen of walking because it is an accessible form of physical activity that can be done for little-to-no cost. By reimagining the built environment of Los Angeles, walking can become an intervention that can passively improve the quality of life of its residents and reduce the risk of metabolic syndrome one step at a time.