

Walkability of local communities: using geographic information systems to objectively assess relevant environmental attributes.

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# Walkability of local communities: Using geographic information systems to objectively assess relevant environmental attributes

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## Abstract

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) can be used to objectively measure features of the built environment that may influence adults's physical activity, which is an important determinant of chronic disease. We describe how a previously developed index of walkability was operationalised in an Australian context, using available spatial data. The index was used to generate a stratified sampling frame for the selection of households from 32 communities for the PLACE (Physical Activity in Localities and Community Environments) study. GIS data have the potential to be used to construct measures of environmental attributes and to develop indices of walkability for cities, regions or local communities.



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## Keywords

Walkability; Physical activity; Environment and public health; Built environment; Geographic information systems

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