In collaboration with the Physical Activity Laboratory, the laboratory’s focus is on understanding health consequences and identifying ways to influence physical activity and sedentary behaviour, using evidence from population-based observational studies and broad-reach intervention trials.

Research Brief
Our work relates to the primary prevention of diabetes, heart disease and cancer, dealing with health consequences of physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour; the measurement and analysis of environmental, social and personal-level determinants of behavioral risk factors - (television viewing, sitting in automobiles, desk- and screen-bound work) and lack of physical activity; and, gathering and interpreting evidence from trials of broad-reach interventions. The aim is to better understand how variations in behaviour can influence health outcomes and to identify the factors that can influence behavioural change. The ultimate goal is to contribute unique insights relevant to public health policy, and particularly to identifying the environmental and social innovations to increase physical activity and reduce sitting time.

Methodologies
We work on large, population-based studies employing behavioural, social and biomarker measures and objective measurement technologies – accelerometers and inclinometers – identifying health-related variations in behaviour, the determinants of behavioural change and associated health-related outcomes.

Selected Publications


Why Focus On Sitting Time?

US adults with the highest proportion of daily time spent sedentary (top quartile of sedentary time, with associated levels of light-intensity activity and moderate-to-vigorous intensity activity; MVPA); based on accelerometer measurements from a large population-based sample – the US National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (adapted from Owen, et al., 2010).

The Adverse Correlates of Prolonged Unbroken Sitting Time

Associations of sedentary time and breaks in sedentary time with quartiles of waist circumference; adjusted for age, sex, race/ethnicity, moderate-vigorous intensity activity and other potential confounders; breaks in sedentary time additionally adjusted for total sedentary time (Healy, et al., 2011).