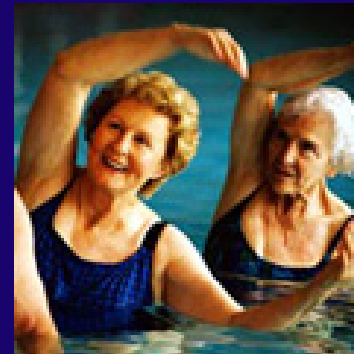


# Increasing Physical Activity Opportunities for Women 55-70



# CAAWS

The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS), is a 25-year old not-for-profit organization working to encourage girls and women to *participate and lead* in sport and physical activity.



# About the Project

- 3 Year Project (September 2005 – August 2008)
- Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada through the Population Health Fund
- Project Partners: ALCOA, CNA, CPRA, Osteoporosis Canada, VON Canada



# Objectives

- Identify barriers to physical activity.
- Identify solutions for increasing physical activity.
- Develop resources for multi-sectoral practitioners and older women that will assist in increasing physical activity levels.
- Increase awareness around the importance of physical activity among multi-sectoral stakeholders on a national basis.
- Evaluate the current and future impacts of the project in increasing physical activity opportunities for women 55–70.



# Key Activities

- Environmental Scan
- Cross Canada Focus Groups
- Resource/material development
- Results Dissemination



# Women 55-70 are a Unique Target Group



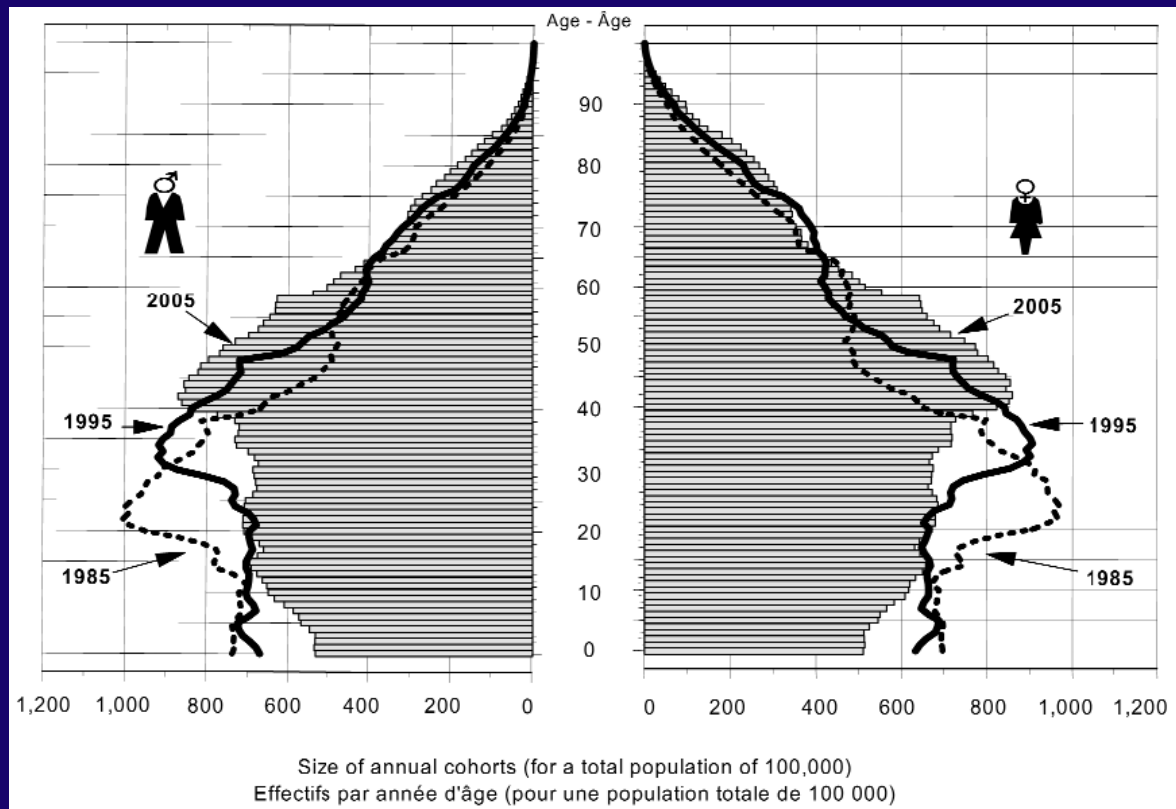
# Temperature Check

How active are women  
55-70 in your community?



# Why should We Care?

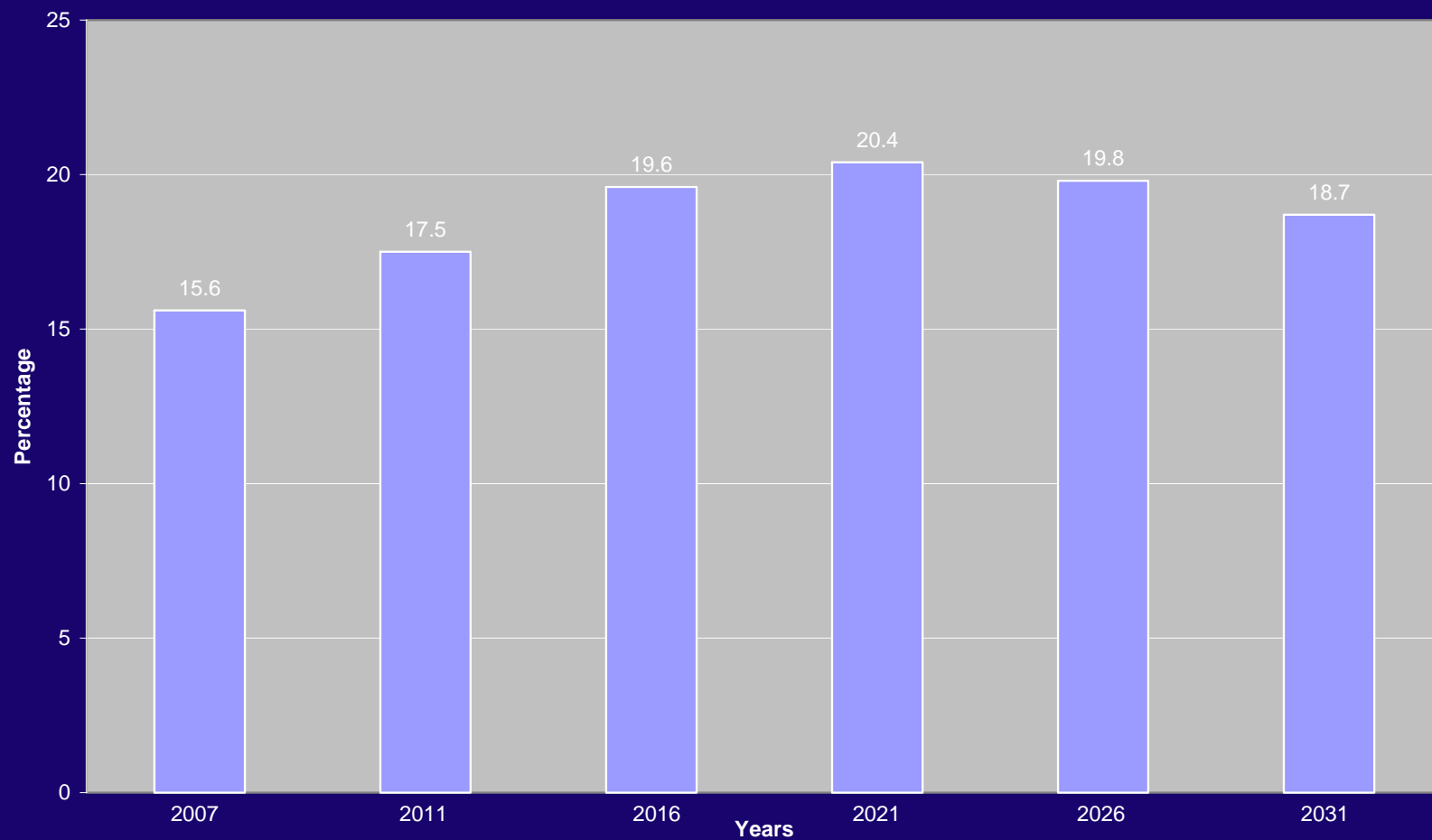
- Critical time in a Woman's Life to be Active
- Very diverse group- hard to program for
- Growing population- Demographic Bulge



Source: Statistics Canada. 2006. Annual Demographic Statistics, 2005.



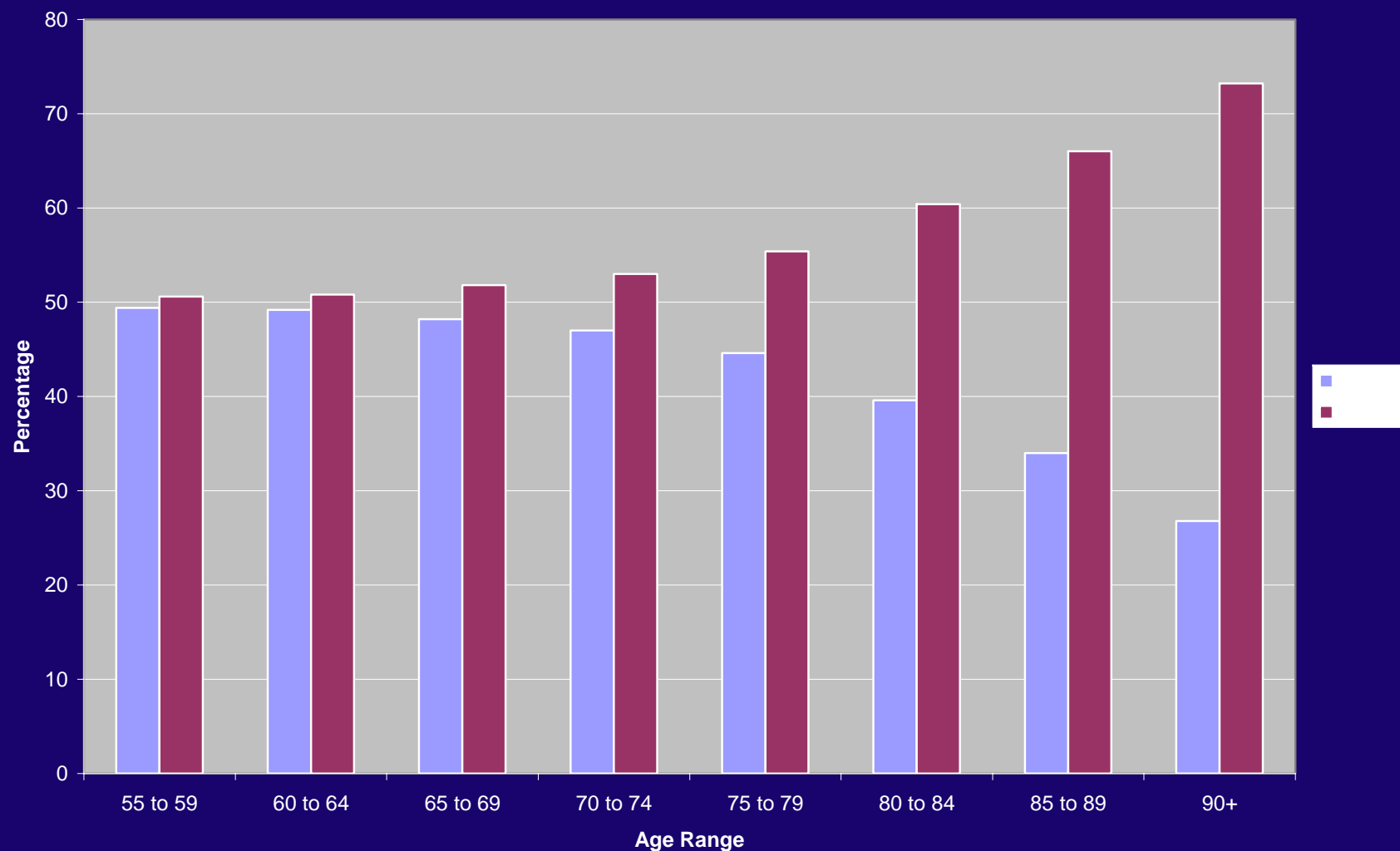
**Figure 2. Projected Number of Canadian Women 55-70 as a Percentage of the Total Canadian Female Population. Canada, 2007 - 2031**



Source: CAAWS, 2007. Using data from Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 051-0001 accessed on January 12, 2008 at <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo10a.htm> and Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 052-0004 accessed on January 12, 2008 at <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo23c.htm>.



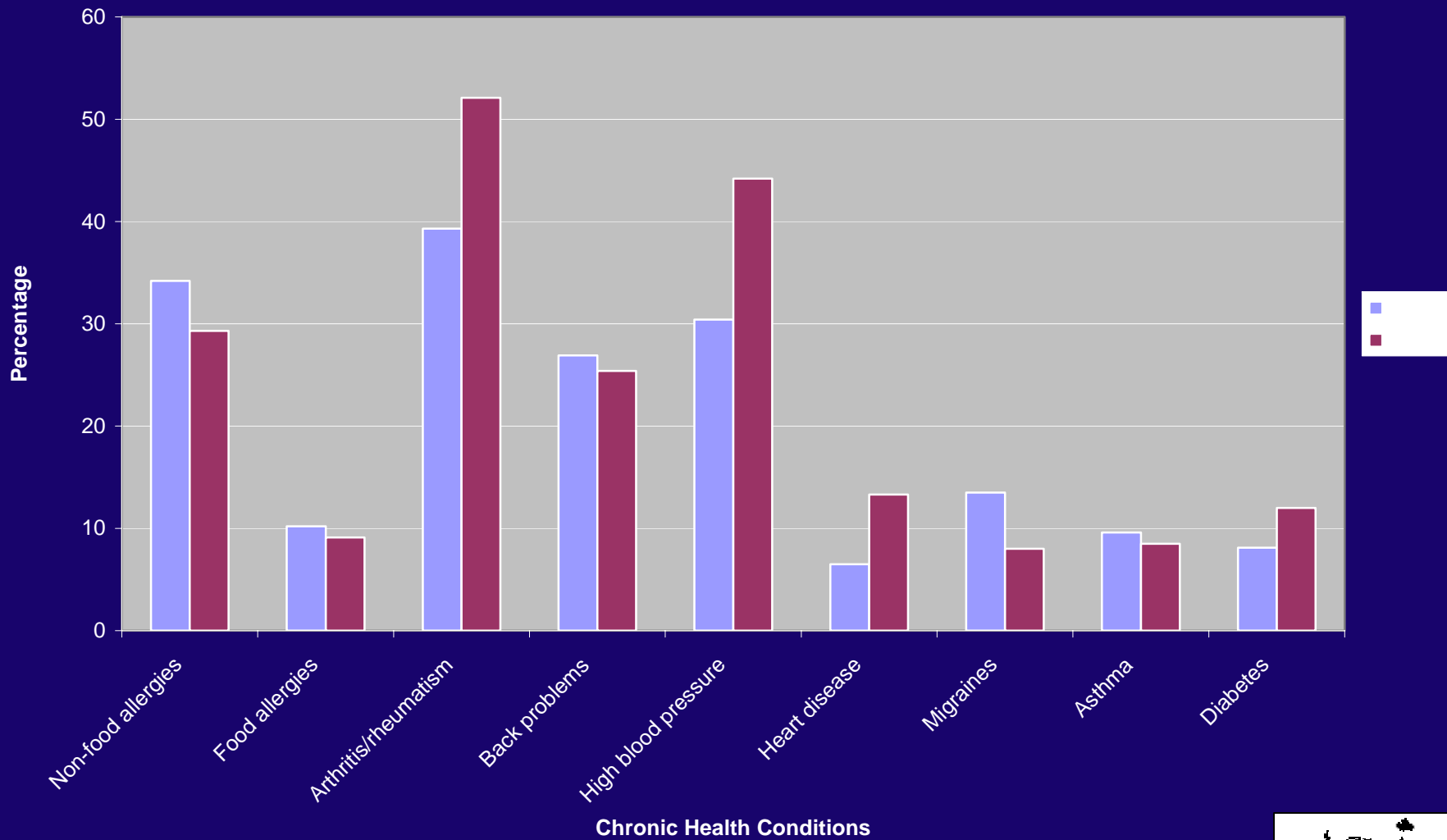
Figure 3. Percentage of Canadian Women to Men by Age (55+). Canada, 2007



Source: CAAWS, 2007. Using data from Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 051-0001 accessed on January 12, 2008 at <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo10a.htm>



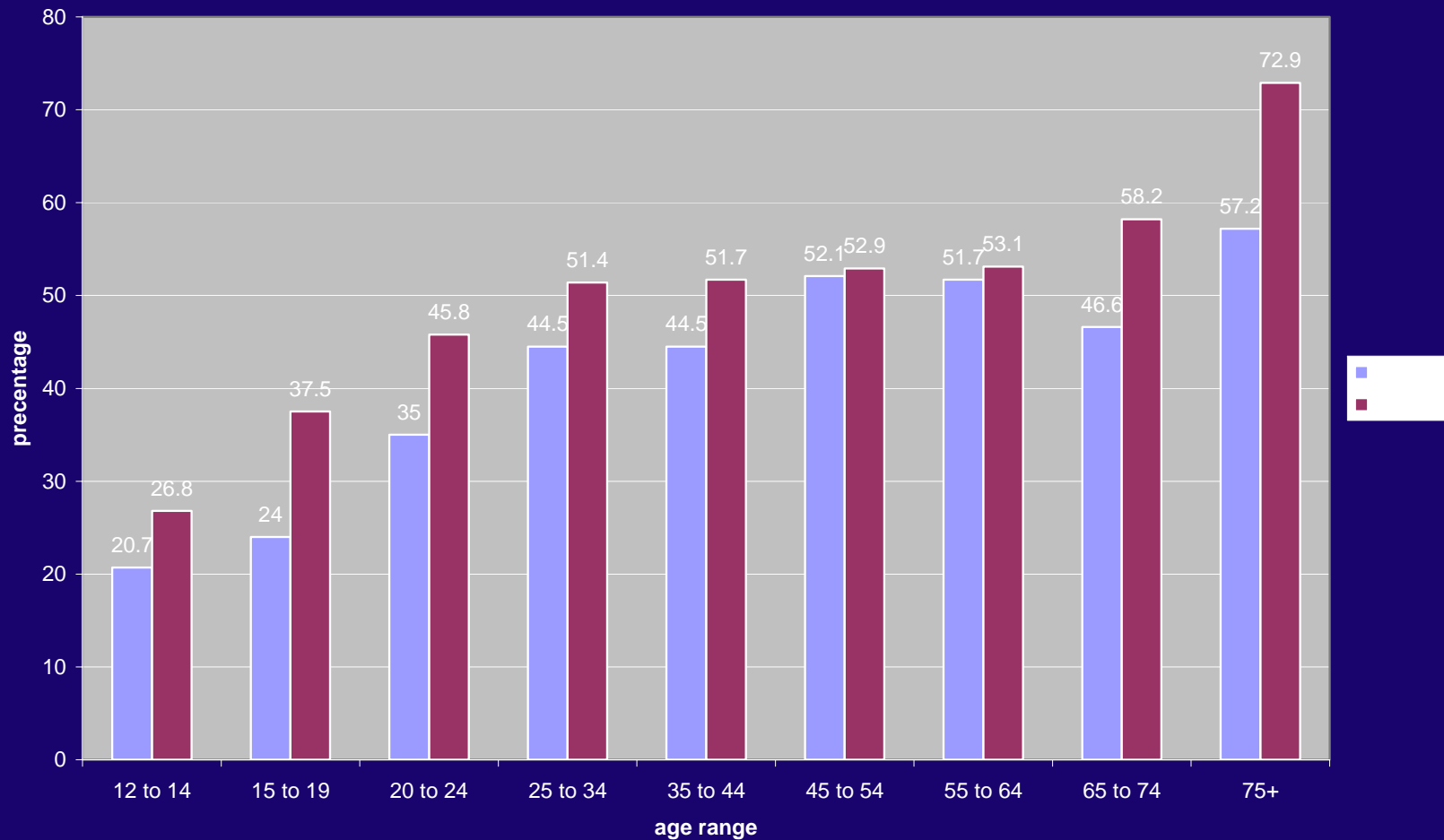
## Percentage of the Female Population aged 55-64 and 65 to 74 Diagnosed with Selected Chronic Health Conditions. Canada, 2003.



Source: CAAWS 2007. Using data from Statistics Canada, 2006. *Women in Canada 2005 5<sup>th</sup> edition*. Referencing Statistics Canada, 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey data.



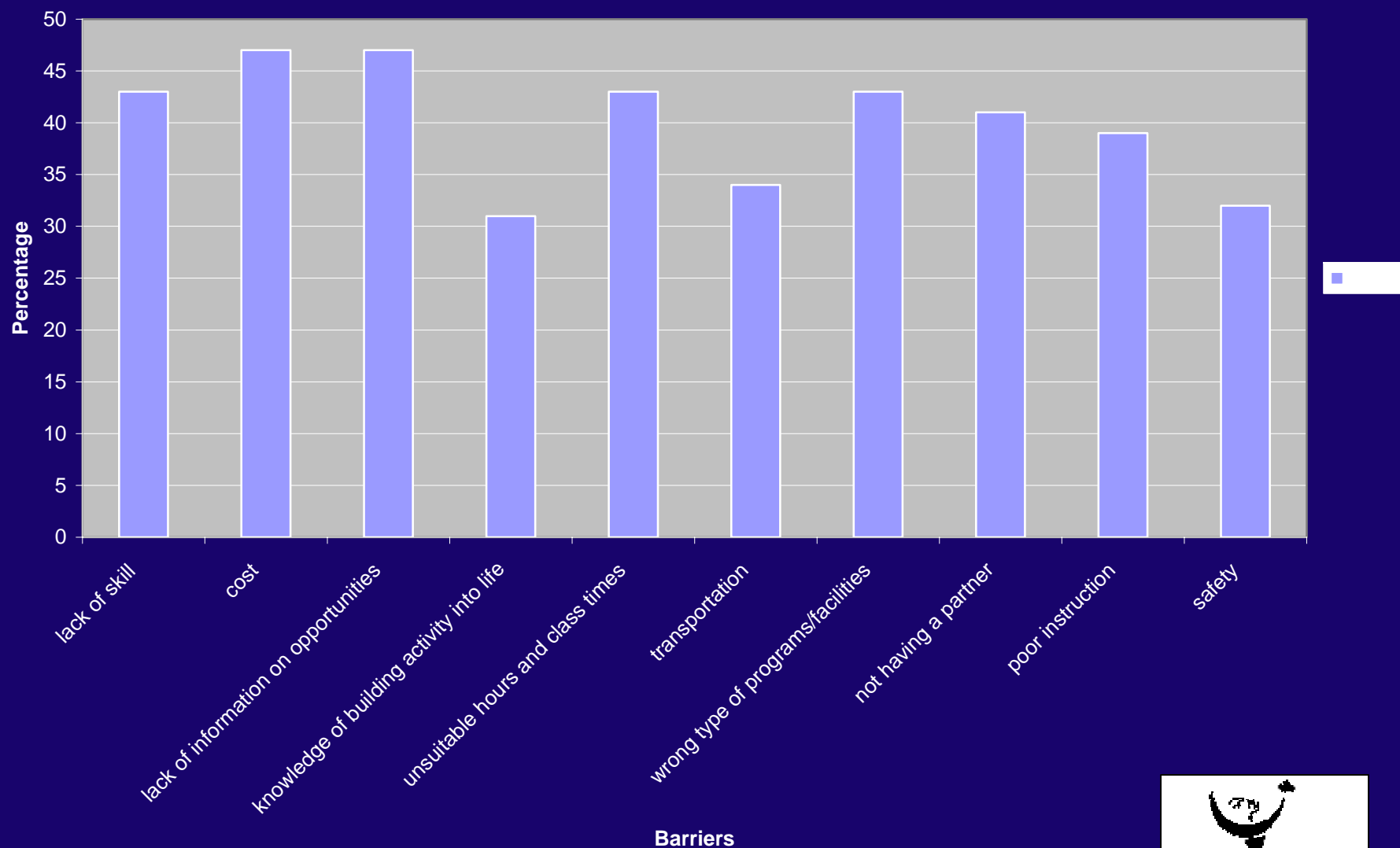
Percentage of physically inactive Canadian females and males (aged 12 and older). Canada, 2003.



Source: CAAWS 2007. Adapted from data found in Statistics Canada (2006), *Women in Canada 5<sup>th</sup> edition: A Gender-Based Statistical Report* using data from the 2003 Statistics Canada, *Canadian Community Health Survey*.



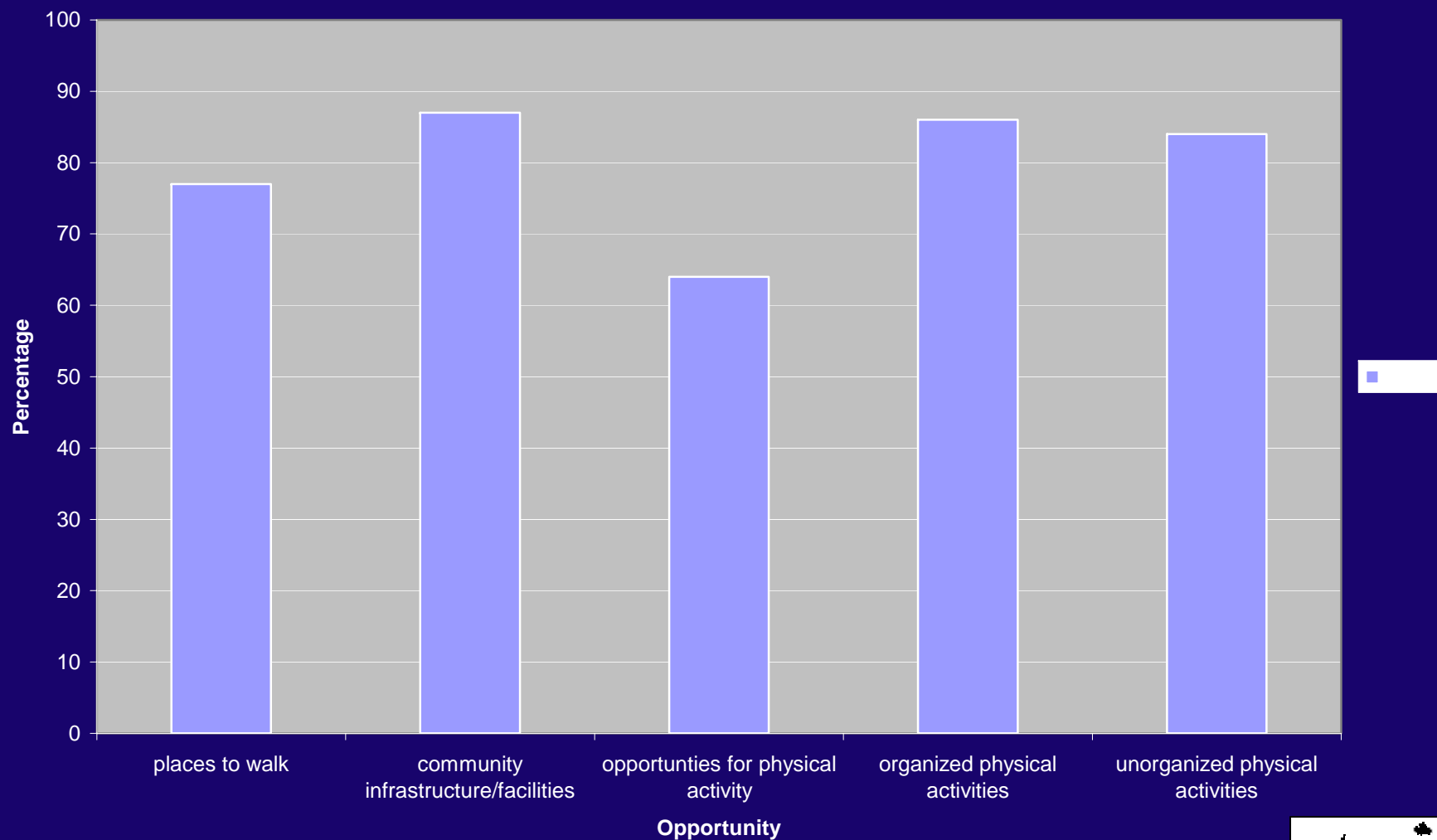
## Identified Barriers to Physical Activity by Women 55-70. Canada, 2004.



Source: CAAWS 2007, Using data from the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2006. *2004 Physical Activity and Sport Monitor*.



### Level of Dissatisfaction with Selected Physical Activity Opportunities by Women 55-70. Canada, 2004.



Source: CAAWS 2007, Using data from the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2006. *2004 Physical Activity and Sport Monitor*.



# Why Should we Care?

- **Women 55-70 are a large, growing segment of the Canadian population**
- Women 55-70 are a diverse group- one size does not fit all
- Health problems and disabilities are a reality for women 55-70
- Physical activity and sport participation decreases with age
- Women 55-70 are dissatisfied with current physical activity and sport opportunities available to them
- **WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!**



# Focus Groups

- Winnipeg
- Thompson
- Regina
- Westlock (1 hour north of Edmonton)
- Vancouver
- Whitehorse
- St. John's
- Moncton (English and French)
- Montreal (English and French)
- Ottawa (English and French)

Total of 38



# Focus Group Structure

- Three Groups in each city/town: Active Women 55-70; Less Active Women 55-70; and Community Stakeholders
- Local Coordinators hired to coordinate
- 8-15 people in each group
- Good Community Mix
- Good mix of ages in each age Group



# What Women Told Us



# Internal Issues

- **Body Image**- instructors, women's only, self-conscious
- **Fears**- safety, injury, skill, self-sufficiency
- **Skills**- opportunity, negative experiences, level
- **Guilt**- conditioning, pressures, knowing but not doing
- **Negative Attitudes**- immediate results, not for them, too hard want easy solution
- **Confidence** – asking questions, lack information
- **Priorities**- where is physical activity on the list
- **Transitions**- disappearing, loss



# External Issues

- **Weather-** summer, winter, darkness, rain
- **Transportation-** access, driving, public transportation
- **Infrastructure-** built environment, welcoming environment, city sprawl
- **Cost-** planning for the future, expense, clothes and equipment, communication



# Impacting Issues

- **Physical activity measures-** daily activity, formula, pain
- **Health-** obesity, joint pain, injuries, illness, mental health, access to health care, doctors opinions
- **Care giving-** sandwiched, lack of support
- **Buddies-** motivation
- **Culture-** language, familiarity, isolation
- **Programming-** instructors, choices, scheduling, adaptations, social component, cliques, communicating what to expect
- **Supportive environments-** community, family, facility
- **Role Models**



# What we can do



# Programming Solutions

- Women only programs work and make women feel more comfortable
- Offering skill training opportunities and regular orientations to machines/classes specifically for women 55-70
- Training instructors to read medical forms, understand health conditions and adapt activities
- Developing physical activity opportunities that involve the whole family- grandchildren, partners, aging parents
- Offering flexible programming to start/stop and change your mind
- Creating environments that are welcoming
- Offering a variety of activities



# Programming Solutions

- Offering seniors rates for everything
- Offering introductory and skills programs at little or no cost
- Making applications for subsidies less intimidating
- Working with partners to offer respite services for caregivers
- Recruiting more women 55-70 to become instructors
- Scheduling programs for women 55-70 at different times throughout the day
- Asking women what they want before developing programs for them



# Built Environment Solutions

- Recommending ice grippers for walking on ice
- Encouraging city managers to keep sidewalks clear and creating safe places for people to walk
- Subsidizing transportation fees for seniors and providing information on how to use public transport
- Encouraging women to carpool
- Incorporating universal design techniques inside and out
- Ensuring indoor and outdoor areas are well lit and use mirrors to avoid any blind corners
- Advocating for walk able communities not city sprawl
- Allowing more time at stop lights for walkers



# Communication and Marketing

- Explaining programs well so women know what to expect
- Explaining the benefits of physical activity to women and community stakeholders
- Including photos of women 55-70 in your brochures and flyers
- Inviting women to attend instead of developing generic ads and flyers
- Including testimonials and success stories is important
- Wording is important- older adult or senior is a barrier
- Encouraging women 55-70 to be role models for their peers, children and grandchildren



# Communication and Marketing

- Going to where women are to tell them about opportunities
- Encouraging and supporting community events, open houses, health fairs and neighbourhood programming to maximize information sharing and physical activity opportunities
- Encouraging meet and greet opportunities to allow women to find buddies
- Offering sampler, try-it sessions



# Group Exercise

**Given what we have learned today, what three things are you going to do differently to engage women 55-70 in physical activity and sport?**



# What Stakeholders Said

- This is a population that we really do not program – we thought we did but we don't
- We need a business case to get the key decision makers on board
- We need help with communications- what do we call this group, what slogans work, etc.
- We need information, best practices and success stories
- We need to continue working together



# Tools Available and in Development

- Focus group report and summary
- Making the Case document
- Photo CD
- Tool kit- fact sheets, program checklist, links to resources, etc.
- Website- inspirational stories, notice board, links to resources, etc.
- Cross Canada Workshops



# For More information

CAAWS Website:

[www.caaws.ca/women55plus](http://www.caaws.ca/women55plus)

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