

In support of the ADL score, enquiry about difficulty in walking between rooms revealed that it was unusual for more than 15% of the elderly to have difficulty. It was found that the proportion of Greek women had greater experiences of difficulty (20 to 30%).

The exercise score could only be computed for the Caucasian elderly and the Japanese. Overall, the least active appeared to be Melbourne and Spata Greeks, especially the women, with only 10% defined as very active; except 40% of Spata men were defined as very active due to their farming activities. Anglo-Celtic and Swedish elderly appeared to be the most active with 40% being defined as very active. The Japanese elderly appeared to be moderately active (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Exercise score, by study community, age group, and gender

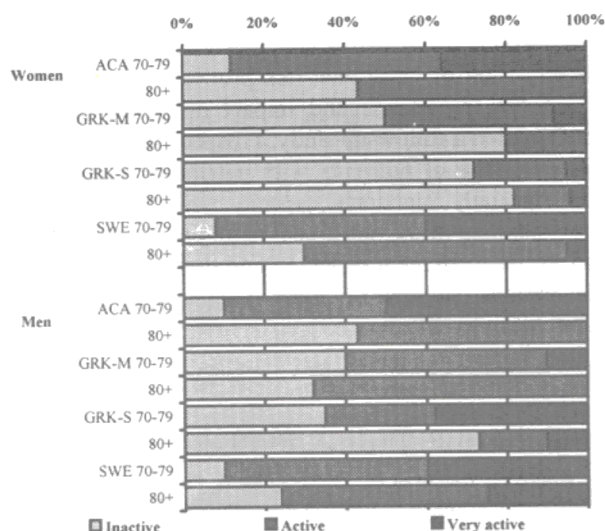
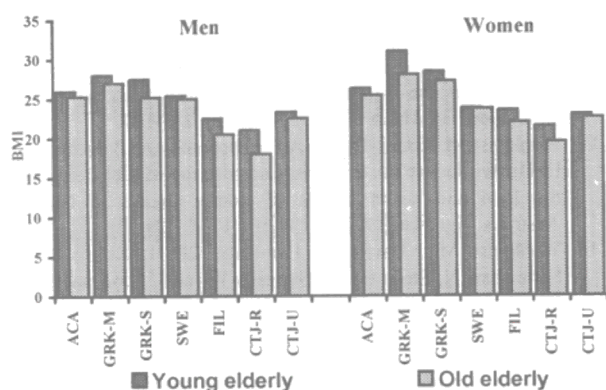


Figure 16. Average body mass index, by study community, age group and gender (measured in kg/m^2)



Body fatness

Greek women in Melbourne had the highest mean body mass index (BMI 30), followed by Greek women in Spata (BMI 29) and Anglo-Celtic women in Melbourne (BMI 27). The remaining Caucasian elderly of both genders had average BMIs of about 25. Filipino and Chinese elderly had average BMIs between 20 and 22, the rural Chinese had the lowest BMIs of all study communities (BMI 19). Overall, the women tended to have higher BMIs than men,

and the young elderly had higher BMIs than their older counterparts (Figure 16).

The Greek and Anglo-Celtic women had the highest average WHRs (about 1.1) compared with Swedish (about 0.8) and Chinese women (about 0.9) and men. The men in all study communities had average WHRs between 0.9 and 0.95 (Figure 17).

Average body fat per cent ranged from 43 to 50% in women and from 25 to 35% in men. The Greek women in Melbourne had the highest mean percentage of body fat (48%), followed by Greek women in Spata (47%) and Anglo-Celtic women (45%). The Swedish, Chinese and Filipino women had about 43% average body fat. The Caucasian men all had average body fat percentage of about 33%. The Asian men appeared to have markedly lower average percentages of body fat (23%) (Figure 18).

Figure 17. Average waist-to-hip circumference ratio, by study community, age group and gender

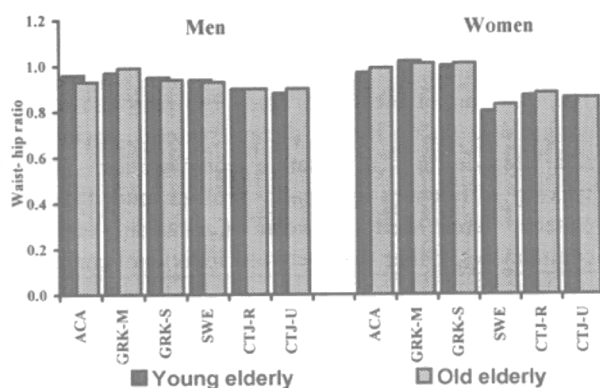
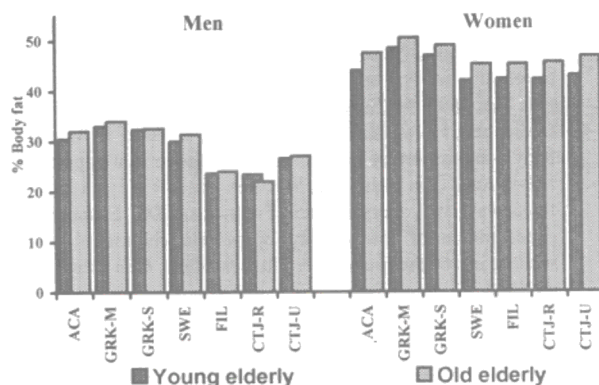


Figure 18. Average percentage body fat, by study community, age group and gender



Blood Lipids

Blood tests were only performed on Caucasian elderly. Average fasting plasma blood glucose was greatest amongst Greeks in Melbourne (6mmol/l), followed by Greeks in Spata (5.5mmol/l) and Anglo-Celtic and Swedish elderly (5.0mmol/l). Women tended to have higher values than men and the old elderly tended to have higher values than their younger counterparts.