Does physical activity rev up my sex drive? [1]

Dear Alice,

I'm curious to know if going to the gym increases sexual drive? I am a female in my 20s and recently started an exercise routine (running and weights), and I have noticed that my sexual drive has increased significantly. There have been no other major changes in my life, and I have been dating the same man for close to two years now, so I can think of no other real reason why my libido would have increased. Is there any real connection between working out in the gym and beneath the sheets?

Thanks,
Sporty and Sexy

Answer

Dear Sporty and Sexy,

As you’ve already noticed, working out at the gym may help you work it in the sack. In addition to increasing aerobic capabilities and muscle strength, physical activity has also been linked to a high-revving sex drive and increased sexual satisfaction, all of which are beneficial beneath the sheets.

Besides possibly enhancing your self-image, which is sexy in itself, being active also leads to the release of certain hormones in the brain known as endorphins. These hormones not only promote an increased sense of well-being, but they may also lead to the release of additional hormones that pump up a person's sex drive. Physical activity can also help increase energy levels, making it more likely for people to want to engage in sexual activity.

Multiple studies have shown that high intensity physical activity is associated with higher levels of testosterone, which is thought to increase sexual desire. Additionally, a recent study looked at over 500 healthy individuals to determine the effect of different types of activities on frequency of sex, ease of orgasm, number of orgasms in a single sexual episode, and level of sexual desire (measured as an increase or decrease in the drive to have sex). The study authors found that aerobic activity overall made the most significant impact on all sexual outcomes measured, with recreational activities (i.e., hiking, kayaking, etc.) having the biggest impact on frequency of
sexual desire and number of orgasms in a single sexual episode. The researchers hypothesized that in addition to increasing hormone levels such as testosterone, physical activity may also improve a person’s body awareness, likely impacting their sexual satisfaction and subsequent desire to have sex.

For those experiencing sexual dysfunction, physical activity can help get the body up and moving again. Being physically active may also offer a lift to those with a penis who experience erectile dysfunction (ED), which can be caused by poor blood flow to the genital region. Working out gets the heart pumping and improves circulation so that all parts of the body get some — blood flow, that is. All of this to say, physical activity helps increase sexual desire and satisfaction in many ways, by getting both the ticker and the pecker back in shape. And those with a vagina and clitoris, no need to feel left out — being physically active may also increase blood flow to the vagina and clitoris, giving them a boost as well.

With all the other well-known health benefits of physical activity, it’s great to see how all that sweat can also be so sexy!

Alice!
Category:
Nutrition & Physical Activity
Fitness
Working Out
Miscellaneous

Related questions
Are antidepressants ruining our sex life? [6]
Multiple orgasms — Possible? [7]
Just can't orgasm [8]
Male and female orgasm — Different? [9]
Low sexual desire [10]
Published date:
May 16, 2008
Last reviewed on:
Jan 17, 2020

Footer menu
Contact Alice!
* Content Use
* Media Inquiries
* Comments & Corrections
Syndication & Licensing
* Licensing Q&As
* Get Alice! on Your Website
Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/does-physical-activity-rev-my-sex-drive

Links