



# GET PHYSICAL

**Exercise may just be the best way to get your girl in the mood for love**

**G**UYS, I'LL LET YOU IN ON A little secret. The weight room is an intensely pleasurable place — and not just because of how good it feels to lift. Despite the musty smell and all that grunting, the gym is a lust den. Think about it: Sweaty bodies move in repetitive unison, each contraction revealing tight muscles and bare skin glowing from the blood pumping beneath.

## EXERCISE + OPPOSITE SEX = HEAT

The whole thing started innocently enough. It was back day, and my training partner and I were doing rows. As he touched the area between my shoulder blades, an electric current pulsed through me. Before I knew it, I was in the throes of, well...let's just say that it wasn't only the exercise that was making me hot and sweaty.

Muscle lust is not an uncommon phenomenon. The American Council of Exercise addressed the topic of trainers coping with unwanted advances from

clients in its member newsletter. *Newsweek* reported the accounts of a personal trainer who slept with many of his clients. Men are arousing women in profound ways inside the weight room. But can hitting the gym really be a warm-up to more exercise in the bedroom?

Quite possibly. In a study of perimenopausal women, Judith Gerber, PhD, found that “people who continued to have good sex-ual arousal were people who exercised. The more they exercised, the better their sex lives.” This is because physical activity stimulates the physiological as well as psychological aspects of sexual arousal. “Blood flow is important,” says Gerber, a clinical associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and psychiatry at the University of Vermont Medical School in Burlington. “Men get erections because of blood flow to the penis,” she says. “When women are aroused, there is also an increase in the blood flow to the genital area, so maintaining the health of your blood vessels is very important.”

Exercise is the best way to do that.

Supporting this point, researchers at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, found that exercise increased a woman's sexual arousal. Subjects did 20 minutes of intense exercise before viewing both neutral and erotic films. Sexual arousal was measured by the subjects' own rating and by vaginal probes that measure blood flow. Measurements taken after the subjects watched the erotic flick demonstrated a marginal increase in blood flow to the vaginal area.

## THE BODY ELECTRIC

But blood flow isn't the only exercise-related sexual stimulant. “Endorphins also impact sexual arousal,” says Gerber. “Runners feel their effects, which influence the brain in much the same way as antidepressants.”

Overall, this mixture of feel-good body chemistry, which is the result of any good workout, can make women feel sexy.

What does that mean for you, boys? To reap the benefits of exercise on your sex life, plan more active dates with the object of your affection. Don't assume that you'll get lucky, but when the two of you are hiking, biking or even lifting together, notice the glow in her cheeks and the smile on her face. Then touch her lightly between her shoulder blades.

**I'm in the mood for...a workout**

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