

Runners Do It Better ...Yes, we do mean sex!

**EXCLUSIVE
SEX REPORT**

Words by Julia Buckley

We all know that regular running is good for us. It improves your fitness, eases stress, and gets you out in the fresh air. But have you thought about the benefits it brings to your sex life? It's true, health and fitness experts generally agree that we runners are a bunch of sex gods and goddesses. Well nearly. Here's 10 good reasons why...

#1. We're bursting with energy

"Sex uses the same energy systems you use to run," says health and fitness consultant Spencer McGawley. "You start slow in the aerobic zone, as you reach pace you begin using your anaerobic systems. Then in the final sprint you hit the burners and power home using the high powered - but quickly exhausted - phosphagen system. These translate directly into the bedroom. Well, in some bedrooms, at least."

#2. We've practised the moves

Another thrust to Spencer's argument is that runners tend to have well developed sex-related muscles. "Runners tend to have strong glute muscles (that's muscles in your bum) and strong hip flexors, which run along the front of the pelvis. This means runners have the ability to produce a very strong thrusting - quite a useful attribute during the act of love, whether you are male or female."

#3. We're less stressy

Dr David Delvin, Director of the Medical Information Service says "Running increases the production of feel-good chemicals in the brain. Called, endorphins, these chemicals induce pleasant, tranquil feelings and reduce stress, which has the effect of making us more likely to be interested in sex and more able to concentrate on the act making us better lovers."

#4. We're healthier

Dr Lee Miller agrees, he wrote on his blog at completerunning.com that: "Research indicates that vigorous exercise can help men maintain the same sexual function as those two to five years younger. Specifically, men can reduce the risk of erectile dysfunction by up to 30 percent if they run at least three hours per week or more."

Beneath this post a reader called Jo comments, "I am dating a runner in his 50's and I was surprised and well pleased to find that he is in tip top shape....in more ways than one."

#5. We're sexier

Running gets you lean, toned, and fit - which just about covers most people's ideas of sexy. Need more proof? Ladies check out Dean Karnazes on page 22. Guys pick up the January issue and get a load of the lovely Nell McAndrew. Case rested.

#6. We've got more confidence

It's not just the physical benefits of running that make us such great lovers. Renowned sex and relationships expert Dr Petra Boynton says it's the all-round positive physical and psychological benefits of running that really helps make runners better lovers; "If someone takes up running and gains confidence from exercise, changing body shape and achieving running targets, that would boost their morale, which in turn could mean better things in the bedroom."

#7. We're up for it

Paula Hall is a sexual and relationship psychotherapist, she says, "The increase in adrenaline we get from running makes our bodies more responsive to arousal and the enhanced body awareness you get from any

fitness regime tends to make us more likely to want to enjoy the sensual pleasures of the flesh." (ww.SexTherapyOnline.co.uk)

#8. We're more adventurous

"Fit runners are able to experiment with tiring love-making positions and stay there for longer," according to sex and relationship therapist, Rose Whitely. "Additionally, for some people, going for a run makes them feel fit and virile, which can increase levels of sexual desire. There's no doubt that feeling good about your body can lessen inhibition in the bedroom."

#9 We're less needy

Julia Armstrong is a former international marathon runner and now a relationship therapist. She says, "Running teaches you to take responsibility for your own body and reminds us that we're all responsible for our own sexual expression and our own orgasms. Those hours alone on the road help us to build a healthy relationship with ourselves. The more complete we are as human beings, the easier it is to enjoy a deeper connection and great sex."

#10 We have a shorter "refractory period".

Yes, that's new word for us as well. Basically, what we mean is, runners are ready for second helpings sooner! Dr John White of California University told us: "The increase in testosterone that running causes heightens the sensations of pleasure during sex, this can lead runners to orgasm sooner. But the good news is that the refractory period is shorter in runners than non-runners."

Turn the page for an RF exclusive revealing more of Dr White's research findings...



Chat-up lines for runners:

(Please note: Running Free magazine accepts no responsibility for any slaps, put-downs, or nausea induced by the use of the following lines.)

- ✦ Are you into speedwork? I'd be happy to give you a quickie.
- ✦ I'm training for a marathon, so I'm being extra careful so I don't get injured... But I'd take a risk on pulling you.
- ✦ You know, cross-training is really important - fancy getting together for some cardio?
- ✦ You need to get your heart rate up. Taking a look at my cute ass might help...
- ✦ Want to join me for some Bodyglide?
- ✦ I can't believe you're not worn out, you've been running through my mind for hours!
- ✦ Do you believe in love at first sight? No worries, I'll slow down and then run past you again.
- ✦ I would like to nominate you for the Running Free award for looking good. Now if you'll give me your name, number, and vital statistics, I'll enter you into the prize draw for an all-expenses-paid date with me.

Runners Do It More ...The Science.

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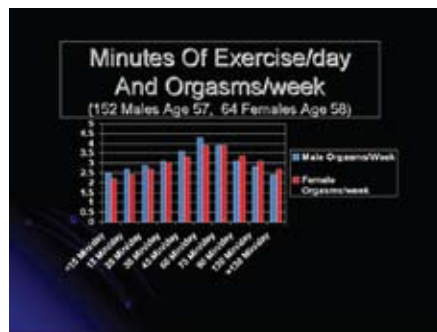
Dr. James White, Professor Emeritus of the University of California, has spent many years investigating the effects of exercise, especially running, on people's sex lives. The results of his recent work have yet to be published, but in a recent chat with Running Free's Julia Buckley, he exclusively revealed some of his most interesting findings.

"There's no doubt that there's a very high correlation between running and sexual activity." Dr White told us. His studies found that, on average, runners have 15-20% more sex than non-runners – that's men and women from their twenties right up to their seventies.

"Sex drives in both men and women depend on testosterone," said Dr White. "Running is one of the best forms of exercise for increasing the levels of testosterone in the body, so I wasn't entirely surprised to find runners have more regular sex."

In one study Dr White took a group of men who were regular runners and compared them with a group who didn't run at all. He found the runners tended to "more actively pursue" sex and got jiggy an average of four times per week. Meanwhile, the non runners had sex a mere two and a half times a week (that's an average, the half isn't a failed attempt!). To investigate further, half of the runners were asked to stop exercising for six weeks and half of the non-runners were put on a vigorous jogging schedule. Guess what happened... The former runners' sexual activity dropped by 15% and the reformed coach potatoes' new running regime boosted their sexual activity by 10%.

Dr White also found that, up to a point, more running means more sex. The table shows how the number of orgasms people have per week increases with the time they spend running each day.



So, the more time you spend running, the more climaxes you're likely to enjoy. That is, up until you run for more than 75 to 90 minutes per day. Increase your running time over that level and you can expect a decline. Dr White says that for many people that amount of running would constitute over-training, which actually leads to a lowering of testosterone and, of course, tiredness, so it's easy to see how you might end up feeling less amorous come bedtime.

Another thing that'll damage your sex life, not to mention your general health, is smoking. Smokers who

do no exercise have an average of 2 orgasms per week, whilst non-smoking runners enjoy twice that amount.

Dr White's studies have also found that runners have more exotic sexual fantasies, greater desire to have sex, they kiss and caress more, and are more readily sexually aroused. What's more, people who run and have regular "vigorous sex" tend to live 5-7 years longer than average.

"So," says Dr White, "if you're interested in living a long, healthy life, featuring lots of orgasms, the best advice I can give is to not smoke, eat a good diet with plenty of antioxidants, keep trim, and run 30-45 minutes five days per week." **RF**

