

Men who do exercise produce better quality semen

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A new study conducted by researchers at the University of Cordoba links moderate physical activity in males with better hormone levels and sperm characteristics that favour reproduction compared to sedentary men. Credit: SINC

A new study conducted by researchers at the University of Cordoba links moderate physical activity in males with better hormone levels and sperm characteristics that favour reproduction compared to sedentary men.

Semen quality at large has dropped in the last 50 years. Amongst other factors, this is due to exposure to external agents and alcohol and [tobacco consumption](#). This decline in sperm properties has caused an increase in reproductive problems.

Therefore, experts have studied the possible relationship between sperm quality and [lifestyle habits](#) in males. Published in the [European Journal of Applied Physiology](#), the new study suggests that men who do moderate [physical exercise](#) have better [hormone levels](#) and their gonads undergo healthier spermatological processes.

The authors assessed whether there was a difference in the hormonal and seminological profiles of physically active and sedentary males. "We have analysed qualitative semen parameters like the ejaculated volume, sperm count, mobility and sperm morphology," as explained to SINC by Diana Vaamonde, researcher at the University of Cordoba and lead author of the study.

In addition, an evaluation was made of the follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), the luteinising hormone (LH), testosterone (T), [cortisol](#) (C) and the T/C ratio. This offers additional information on the environment needed for the sperm creation process as well as the anabolic or catabolic state of the body.

"Despite the fact that the sample population is not very big (31 men), given the complexity of the analysis, this is the first study that assessed the differences between these parameters in both populations," states the researcher.

The results conclude that the physically active subjects display better semen values. More specifically, the differences found were in the seminological parameters of total progressive velocity and morphology, in the FSH, LH and T hormones and in the T/C ratio. Hormone data thus supports the hypothesis of a more favourable environment for sperm formation.

Moderate exercise is the key

In 2010, the same researcher published a study showing that the sperm parameters of elite sportsmen (triathletes and waterpolo players) are worse than men who are just physically active. It is possible that the increased strain of training causes a decline in sperm quality.

"Despite that fact that more studies are needed to confirm these findings, we can suggest exercise to improve the hormonal environment and stimulate the sperm process," adds Vaamonde.

More information: Diana Vaamonde, Marzo Edir Da Silva-Grigoletto, Juan Manuel García-Manso, Natalibeth Barrera, Ricardo Vaamonde-Lemos. "Physically active men show better semen parameters and hormone values than sedentary men". Eur J Appl Physiol (2012) 112:3267. [DOI 10.1007/s00421-011-2304-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00421-011-2304-6)

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