



## LOW PRESSURE FITNESS AND SEXUAL FUNCTION

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The psychological and physical benefits of exercise have been extensively documented in scientific literature. Empirical evidence reveals that regular physical activity is a protection factor against many chronic illnesses, especially in cardiovascular disorders like: strokes, coronary artery disease, and hypertension. Additionally, it is also a key factor for sexual performance and sexual pleasure enhancement. Physical exercise in general, and Hypopressives in particular, can improve sexual life and sexual performance during intercourse.

## Here are ten reasons that explain why Low Pressure Fitness - hypopressives practice can help to improve the quality of the sexual function:

### 1. Greater proprioception and perineal musculature awareness.

The hypopressives exercises are characterized for working in different positions with a very characteristic respiratory pattern that causes an “abdominal vacuum”. This vacuum generates suction on the pelvic viscera reducing ligamentous tension, through which the visceral organs are nearly literally absorbed. One of the medium to long term effects of this practice is the visceral relocation. A study carried out by Latorre et al. (2011) shows, through magnetic resonance, the behavior of the pelvic musculature, uterus and vagina during the hypopressives diaphragmatic aspiration, and how the angle between the uterus and vagina varies in comparison to the resting position. Through ultrasounds, the same two authors verify a change in the perineal viscera position, in which the angle between the urethra and the vaginal wall increases by 12°, from 65 to 77°, during the hypopressives maneuver in resting position. The researchers pointed out in this study that hypopressives techniques can be used as a proprioceptive resource for the pelvic floor. Therefore it can be concluded that a greater proprioception and pelvic floor musculature awareness will enhance sensation in that region.

We should keep in mind that many women are not able to contract their pelvic floor nor properly identify their genitals. There are several studies that indicate some women are unable to contract their perineal muscles (Bo et al., 1998; Bump et al., 1991), due largely to their low proprioception and body knowledge. In this regard, it has been found that over 30% of women suffering from pelvic floor dysfunction are unable to contract their pelvic musculature (Bø & Mørkved, 2007). For this reason, awareness is essential, and also practicing pelvic floor Low Pressure Fitness - hypopressives exercises in order to gain sensibility and control over this musculature.



### 2. Libido and sexual drive boost.

From a certain age, the production of certain hormones such as testosterone starts decreasing. Low Pressure Fitness - hypopressives exercises can help to improve this hormonal production that is closely linked to sexual drive in both men and women. Testosterone is a key factor for libido in both sexes. This hormone is produced by the body’s endocrine system, and is generated in the testicles in men, and in the ovaries and the adrenal glands in women. Its control mechanism is located in the hypothalamus, an area of the brain where important centers of the vegetative life reside.

Acute physical exercise acts as a stressor, which produces hormonal changes as a response to this stress. The hormonal response to physical exercise depends on several factors such as intensity, type of training, and other individual and psychological factors. Some of these hormones have been studied in relation to acute physical exercise, such as testosterone and cortisol (Moya-Albiol and Savior, 2001). The ratio of these two hormones can be an indicator of the body’s adaptation to the effort produced by both acute and regular exercise. In general, testosterone concentration increases after high intensity physical efforts in both aerobic and anaerobic exercise. It increases even in sedentary people who carry out more moderate efforts. Hypopressive exercises involve a medium-intensity physical effort, as in addition to demanding an important muscle activation, they are carried out under intermittent oxygen lacking conditions, which cause a lowering of the oxygen saturation during training (Rial et al., 2014) and pose a great stress to the body.

### 3. Erectile dysfunction prevention.

Erectile dysfunction is very common among men, and in women it facilitates the climax or orgasm. Depending on the definition and study design, its prevalence rate varies between 10 and 52%, especially for 40-70 years old men, with a western incidence of 25-30 new cases for 1000 inhabitants per year, according to Prieto et al., (2010).

A study carried out by Derby et al., (2000) reveals that obesity and a sedentary life style are significantly linked to erectile dysfunction. Another recent study by Hsiao et al., (2012) on healthy, young men, shows the link between an increment in physical activity and a better sexual function. Carrying out some physical activity such as hypopressives and watching our weight, are two ideal preventive measures against erectile dysfunction.



### 4. Endorphins production, linked to wellbeing and pleasure.

During physical exercise, certain endorphins related to wellbeing and pleasure feelings are produced. Endorphin activity is linked to the brain limbic system, where the hypothalamus is located and which contains some receptors with which it interacts. They function like neurotransmitters, whose basic mission is to reward us with a pleasant sensation when we do something good for our body. For example, doing exercise or having sex, motivates us to carry on seeking that sensation by practicing these beneficial activities. Creating this stimulus-answer cycle will help us to feed back this stimulation circle.

### 5. Pelvic and genital vascularization increment.

Female genitals have a very rich vascularization and they are the body part with most sensitive terminations. An increment in vascularization will improve the irrigation and pleasure achievement, as it is closely related to the sexual function. Researchers in 2009, studied the clitoral blood flow via dopplet ultrasound in healthy women and more active women, sportswomen, finding that the more physically active women had a larger clitoral blood flow. Exercise increases genital excitement in healthy women, probably due to an increment in the sympathetic nervous system activity, according to Thierney et al., (2012). These authors carried out a study on women who took antidepressants, and found out that exercising prior to sexual stimuli, enhanced genital excitement. Women who reported a greater sexual dysfunction had greater increments in genital excitement after exercise. This leads to the conclusion that physical training can help to reach orgasms and to increase the vaginal flow. For all this, hypopressives seem to be an adequate form to increase vascularization, as stated in a study by Thyl et al., (2009). In which they examine, via echo-doppler, the improvements on the medium femoral venous return caused by Low Pressure Fitness hypopressives techniques.



## 6. Benefits of training in pairs.

Doing exercise with another person has plenty of advantages over individual training. Various studies have showed that doing exercise before sex increases both sexual drive and blood flow, so it is recommended to first train physically and then later on “train” in a more sexual way. Pinsach&Rial Hypopressive techniques have a hypopressives program for couples that consists in several static positions and small movements carried out with the partner’s help.

There are some exercises in pairs, as seen in the images, that help to achieve certain positions that would be impossible or inadequate to carry out individually. Many of them are positions commonly adopted during sexual intercourse. The complicity and transference obtained by training with your partner will be more easily transferable to sex play. Sharing with your partner some physical activity can also be somewhat erotic, because it connects you through a moving, free, attractive and relaxed body. During sexual intercourse we feel pleasure, both giving and receiving. The same thing happens during hypopressives sessions in pairs, where for some of the positions you help the other person to achieve a goal. Doing exercise together can allow for partners to motivate and encourage each other; which could lead to putting forth more effort. It can also help you to be more disciplined in an exercise program or routine. A study with 250 men and women carried out by the University of California, revealed that people who practice exercise for 40 daily minutes enjoyed a sexual activity and a sexual drive two times more than those that only dedicated 20 daily minutes to disciplines such as walking, jogging, swimming, playing tennis, cycling and weight lifting.

## 7. Respiratory and physical parameters improvement.

Training your musculature and lung capacity will turn your body into a “more efficient machine during intercourse”. Being fit has a positive influence in physical performance. A study on chronic heart failure patients showed that moderate exercise practice was correlated with an improvement in their sexual activity (Belardinelli et al. 2003).

Two main aspects of Low Pressure Fitness - hypopressives training are respiration and posture. Including respiratory exercises in your regular training is ideal to improve physical performance. A study on professional women soccer players revealed that after six weeks of hypopressives exercise practice, their forced volume and maximum respiratory flow had improved (Negreira et al., 2014).

## 8. Stress reduction.

Stress has an influence on the so-called sexual drive inhibition. Both erectile sexual dysfunction and premature ejaculation are linked to stress response and psychosomatic disorders (Gutiérrez, 2005). Stress has been found to reduce testosterone (a hormone related to sexual desire) production. Exercise helps to reduce anxiety, depression and tension. Dopamine and serotonin are two neurotransmitters directly linked to one’s mood. During exercise, their production increases.



## 9. Improved Self-esteem

Improvements at a muscular and aesthetic level achieved through the hypopressives practice will promote self-esteem and self-image. And combined with all the previous factors, you will end up feeling better about yourself. Being in good physical condition also contributes to sexual pleasure in two other ways: it can help to develop a more positive self-image and improve one’s ability to overcome stress related tension which, as already mentioned, can inhibit the sexual drive.

## 10. Pelvic musculature toning and strengthening.

The ability and strength necessary to keep the pelvic floor muscles contracted, is linked to the excitement and orgasmic level. Lowenstein et al. (2010), found out that women with a medium-high strength in their pelvic floor muscles obtained a greater scoring in excitement and orgasmic control than women with weaker muscles. A recent study on professional rugby female players practicing Low Pressure Fitness - hypopressives exercises revealed an increment in their perineum contraction strength and also in their abdominal musculature (Álvarez et al., 2014). A randomized study on women carrying out a hypopressives exercise program (8 weeks 30 minutes x 3 days/week) revealed a significant increment in the pelvic floor muscle tone after the program (Soriano, 2014).

For all the previous reasons, carrying out a physical exercise regular program, and a hypopressives program in particular, is an excellent way to keep fit and have a healthy sexual life.

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