

The Scientific Link between Exercising and Cheating on Your Wife

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When your spouse starts exercising out of the blue, beware: he or she may not be getting into shape just for you. A survey from the infidelity-based dating site Ashley Madison suggests that gym rats and cheating spouses may have a set of dumbbells in common, and that men and women who cheat tend to tone up their bodies in honor of their new partners.

“The excuse of going to the gym was often cover for a different type of exercise,” Robert Herbst, a personal trainer and attorney, who worked as the general counsel for a large chain of gyms across the Northeast, told *Fatherly*. The survey—which found that nearly three-quarters of Ashley Madison users got into shape for their flings, and not their spouses—comes from a decidedly less than scientific source. But experts say there’s some truth to the observed link between infidelity and interest in exercise.

“People report they exercised for themselves, but also because they want feel wanted,” Paul Keable, Chief Strategy Officer at Ashley Madison told *Fatherly*. “And that’s part of the reason people commit infidelity, too.”

Exercise may even spur a cheater onwards. Studies have shown that exercise increases an individual's libido, which may leave a jogging wife frustrated by her couch potato husband. And there's strong evidence that spouses with misaligned sex drives are more likely to cheat. "Sex is a huge issue when there's an imbalance between two people," Keable says. "And it's not only on the male side."

At the same time, experts are reluctant to say that working out is a risk factor for infidelity, or that exercise has any causal relationship with cheating. "I wouldn't say exercise is a cause of sign of infidelity, but there is a space between couples that gets bigger when one person takes up something like exercise and the other person doesn't come along with them," Keable warns. "Are you having disagreements about each other's intimate wants and needs? Do you know where this need for physical fitness coming from? There have to be other causal elements to suggest that there may be something going on."

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