

Five-Minute Stress Relief.com

The Chemistry of Lust and Love

Initial Attraction

Psychologists point to studies that have found these components are the most influential:

- Body Language 55%,
- Tone and speed of voice 38%
- What we say 7%

Pheromones

Pheromones have been thoroughly studied in mammals, who possess a *vomeronasal organ* inside their noses. Researchers at the University of Colorado, in 1985, discovered confirmation that this organ also exists in adult humans, with some people being sensitive to its receptors. (A small pit may be found in the nasal septum of some people, and some researchers have argued that this pit represents a functional vomeronasal organ.) While this point is open for debate, there are several studies that show evidence of sexual attraction through body scent.

- One study demonstrated that the scent of *androstadienone* (a chemical component of male sweat) stimulates higher levels of cortisol in females – significantly affecting the mood of women. Scientists propose that the ability of androstadienone to affect the endocrine balance of the opposite sex makes it a human pheromonal chemosignal.
- The results of this research led to the conclusion that women preferred the scent of men whose immune systems were different from their own. This infers that the women's instincts were to select a mate whose offspring would possess a strong, wide-range immune response.
- Another study at the University of California, Berkeley, (published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*), has delivered the first **direct proof** that that merely several whiffs of androstadienone in men's sweat affected women's sexual hormones. Boosting that their study was the first instance of changing a woman's hormonal levels through only sniffing – not applying the chemical to the upper lip – researchers cited the recorded stimulation as changed mood, sexual arousal, physiological arousal and brain activation.

Neurotransmitters Called Monoamines

Adrenaline

The excitement of feeling attraction to someone turns on your stress response, increasing blood levels of adrenaline and cortisol. The physiological symptoms when this happens are: feeling a flush of heat, sweating; feeling your heart racing and your mouth going dry as you speak.

Dopamine

A biochemical that stimulates an intense sense of pleasure. (This neurotransmitter is also triggered the use of cocaine.) Surges of dopamine result in increased energy, reduced need for sleep or food, increased focus of attention and sense of delight.

Serotonin

An important regulator of anger (lowers it); also produces alterations in perception, emotional response, and thought process (a mood elevator or anti-depressant that is uplifting); also stimulates sexuality.

Oxytocin

A powerful hormone released by men and women during orgasm (that afterglow feeling of bliss)

that deepens feelings of attachment and makes couples feel much closer to one another after they have had sex. Scientists theorize that the more sex a couple has, the deeper their bond becomes.

© 2009 Five-Minute Stress Relief - All Rights Reserved

Sources: The Vomeronasal (Jacobson's) Organ in Man: Ultrastructure and Frequency of Occurrence *The Journal of Steroid Biochemistry and Molecular Biology* 1991 Oct;39(4B):545-52 **Smelling a Single Component of Male Sweat Alters Levels of Cortisol in Women** *The Journal of Neuroscience* February 7, 2007, 27(6):1261-1265 **Medline Dictionary** (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus>) *Healthfinder Library* (<http://healthfinder.gov/library>)