

# sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

## wildfact

SexTalk is now tweeting on Twitter at UofASexTalk.

## Q What is the average amount of calories you can burn during sex?

A. The short answer to your question is “it depends.” Just as with any type of physical activity, duration, intensity and body weight are all variables that will make a difference in how many calories are expended during sex. But if you are thinking about skipping your daily bike commute or regular workout at the Rec Center in favor of more “sexercise,” keep in mind that the non-coital forms of physical activity tend to burn more calories per unit of time.

Reliable data on these types of measures is scarce as you might imagine, but one study estimated that a 175-pound individual would burn around 150-200 calories during 30-45 minutes of intercourse. To put this in perspective, that's roughly half the calories that same person might expend during 30-45 minutes of bowling.

In short, healthy sex has many benefits, but burning calories isn't necessarily at the top of the list. In addition to fostering intimacy, research shows that good sex can have a positive effect on stress, sleep, the immune system and self esteem. The key word here is *healthy*, since sex without protection from STDs or pregnancy, for instance, can lead to more health problems than benefits.

Here at the UA, with our expanding Rec Center, warm winters and plenty of outdoor opportunities to stay fit, there is no shortage of other ways to stay active *outside* the bedroom. See the list below for some other general examples of energy expenditure.

These values are calculated based on an 150-pound individual at a leisurely pace for one hour (if you weigh more you burn more, if you weigh less you burn less):

- Frisbee..... 216 calories
- Yoga ..... 252 calories
- Biking ..... 264 calories
- Walking ..... 324 calories
- Ping Pong ..... 444 calories
- Basketball ..... 570 calories
- Swimming ..... 636 calories
- Running..... 667 calories
- Racquetball.... 726 calories

For more answers to real student questions on sex and relationships, check out [www.health.arizona.edu](http://www.health.arizona.edu) and search for “SexTalk.” From there you can peruse the SexTalk archives going back to 2001, listen to SexTalk podcasts on iTunes U and submit a question of your own.



Have a question? Send it to [sextalk@email.arizona.edu](mailto:sextalk@email.arizona.edu)

SexTalk is written by Lee Ann Hamilton, M.A., CHES and David Salafsky, MPH, health educators at The University of Arizona Campus Health Service.