There's no truth to the myth that sex before a match hurts athletes' performance, officials say.

Editor's note: Read this article in Spanish on CNNMexico.com

(CNNMexico.com) -- The International Olympic Committee distributed 150,000 condoms to athletes competing in London 2012. But what about the myth that claims that sex before a competition reduces the players' performance?

Some athletes have admitted that the Olympics are not only a stage for world records and medals, but in the Olympic Village, sexual relationships are common among competitors and volunteers. This is a different story compared to previous decades.

"At the end of the '50s and beginning of the '60s, people thought that sex diminished the players' performance," said Antonio Miguel, head of medical services at the Club Universidad Nacional Pumas, one of the Mexican first division's top soccer clubs, and a former football player.
"Coaches gave us nitrate salts (potassium nitrate, a substance used to prevent erections) because, according to them, this would inhibit the sexual desire," Miguel said.

Miguel explains that this myth was a product of the lack of knowledge on these topics. However, this has changed.

Sex, games and Olympic village life

Juan Carlos Medina, general coordinator of the sports department at the Tecnologico de Monterrey, a Mexico university, said sexual relations actually have benefits for athletes.

"It helps you feel relaxed and sexually, mentally and physically satisfied," he said. "This contributes to reduce the athlete's anxiety levels before an important match."

"The Netherlands national soccer team, at the 1978 World Cup in Argentina, is an example of this," Medina said.

"Some of those players were accompanied by their wives, and they won the second place. I don't say this is a determinant factor, but it brings support.

"Another example is Elias Figueroa, a Chilean soccer player, who once said that his coach advised them to have sex the afternoon before an important game, and he even repeated the encounter after the match, because it was relaxing."

According to Medina, sex helps to distract the mind from the competition and that helps sweep away mental fatigue, which is more dangerous than physical fatigue.

"Even Pele confessed that he never suspended sexual encounters with his wife before a game, I mean, that thing about sex helping to relax is a verified truth," he said.

There is no scientific evidence that sex could alter an athlete's performance. Maria Cristina Rodriguez Gutierrez, director of sports medicine at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, or UNAM, said that the belief that sex before the game affects a competitor stems from coaches' training.

Rodriguez added that the oxygen consumption and the calories burned during a sexual encounter are minimal: "Sex only burns between 200 and 300 kilocalories, which doesn't compare to running a marathon or just a regular workout session. You can restore these calories by eating a chocolate bar or drinking a can of soda."

Counter-productive scenarios

However, the consumption of alcohol or cigarettes or lack of sleep, which sometimes accompanies sexual activity, does affect athletes' performance.

Rodriguez indicated that the moderation is the key. "Every athlete or player, professional or amateur, can have sex as long as he or she goes to bed early, hydrates, avoids mood altering drinks and cigarettes, because all this has a negative impact on their body."

Miguel explained that during the years, science has verified that this
activity does not influence an athlete's performance, "much less if it's with a steady partner. However, one-night stands could alter a player's performance because these emotional situations wear you out more than physical ones."

Rodriguez said the only case in which the effects of sex might be counterproductive is in combat sports.

"For combat athletes like fighters or boxers, having sex before an important fight can reduce the aggressiveness and make them passive," although effects vary from person to person.

"Sexual activities must never be prohibited to athletes, since there is no scientific evidence to support it. The same applies to men and women," said Rodriguez.

CNNMexico.com's Marysabel Huston-Crespo contributed to this report.
Sex before competing: Does it boost athletes’ performance? - CNN.com

Who pays for this? Would love to know.

I also get sleepy after having sex. But them guys with tights look really nice and tempting. I guess I’ll start saving to to Rio in 4 years. Maybe I can help them win a gold.

Everything is better after sex.

What liberal thought this question up...it's stupid.

Says the conservative who doesn’t enjoy sex or condone condom use.

It is no wonder armies used to (and probably still do) have throngs of prostitutes accompany them during their campaigns. Apparently sex before or after action is beneficial.

I would find it distracting with all those half-nude athletes running around with hard-ons and tight clothes.

I am willing to take one for the team, if there are any attractive female athletes between 18 and 25 that needs a boost, I am here for you. I can handle more then one at a time.

I am a guy and i am ready for you. let me know your address and your phone number, i will be there in a heart beat.

men running is track events will run faster if they know they’ll have sex after the race. But not before it lol

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I'm with you on that one....

anyone else find it funny Usain Bolt the worlds fastest man celebrated with members of the swiss female handball team???

Come on......

He just did!!!!!

150,000 condoms - there are only 10,000 athletes.

Wow, maybe the rumor about hope solo pulling a train on the italian soccer team (all of them) is true after all.

Sex......the new olympic sport...why not....almost anything can be considered a sport these days.

I find it boosts performance.

so the economy is still terrible.

If science needs my 2 cents worth testimony, i wilt after sex and in need of some good sleep to recuperate but that was in the old good days.

Not if you're a boxer like myself. Sex before a bout will cause you the entire bout. Sex lowers testerone and thus lowers aggression.

It says that in the article from one "expert."
I don't know about this, but I'm guessing the better athletes GET more sex (this from the guy always picked last on the playground). Maybe it's a chicken-egg thing.

4 hours ago  4 Likes

Willing to help research - ladies gymnastics, please contact me prior to your next event.

Thanks.

4 hours ago  4 Likes

Depends on who you are having the relations with. Some can't get enough and will wear you out.

4 hours ago