

Sex Can Kill You, According To US Study

Sudden bursts of physical activity - such as having sex or jogging - significantly increase the risk of having a heart attack, a new study has found.

Researchers in the US say the chances of cardiac arrest during or immediately after such exertions are particularly high among people who do not get regular exercise.

It has long been known physical activity can cause heart problems, but the new study by Dr Issa Dahabreh of Tufts Medical Centre in Boston helps to quantify that risk.

His team analysed data from 14 studies looking at the link between exercise, sex and the risk of heart attacks or sudden cardiac death.

They found people are 3.5 times more likely suffer one of the two when they are exercising compared to when they are not.

And they are 2.7 times more likely to have a heart attack either during or immediately after sex compared with when they are inactive.

Jessica Paulus, another Tufts researcher who worked on the study, said the danger was relatively high, but that the period of increased risk was brief.

"These elevated risks are only for a short period of time (one to two hours) during and after the physical or sexual activity," she said.

Because of that, the risk to individuals over the course of a year is still quite small, she said.

"If you take 1,000 people, each individual session of physical or sexual activity per week can be associated with an increase of 1 to 2 cases of heart attack or sudden cardiac death per year," she said.

She said it was important to balance the findings with other studies showing regular physical activity reduces the risk of heart attacks and sudden cardiac death by 30%.

"What we really don't want to do is for the public to walk away from this and think exercise is bad," she said.

She said it meant people who did not work out regularly needed to start any exercise programme slowly, gradually increasing its intensity over time.