

# Here's How Your Body Knows You Found the Perfect Sexual Partner

It's all about your immune system, apparently.

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One of the real secrets of white-hot attraction to someone isn't terribly sexy, according to [a recent study](#) published in *Nature*: It's a part of your genetic coding.

All humans have their own unique [human leukocyte antigen \(HLA\) complex](#), which helps the immune system differentiate between its own cells and those of unwanted viruses and bacteria. But they also can be hugely influential when it comes to attraction. The researchers studied attraction patterns in 254 couples and found that having a partner with a very different HLA complex "correlates with sexuality and enhances the desire to procreate." That means your genes determine how badly you want to get it on with your partner. So opposites *do* attract, in a way.



It also might account for why you think your significant other smells so good. The researchers saw that most of the couples were more inclined to think fondly of their partners' odor if their HLAs differentiated. (However, the researchers noted that because predilections for odor were self-reported, it could have been influenced by the fact they were already happily in a relationship.)



All of this is more than just trivia to shout out at a bar. It can actually benefit evolution—at least, in the case of animals. The researchers found that if two animals with unlike major histocompatibility complexes (or MHC)—which is what scientists call all animals' version of HLA—loved each other very much and they mixed their bodily fluids together, then

their offspring would be born with a super-charged immune system.

So, next time you're out, try asking: "What's your genetic HLA blueprint?"  
Couldn't hurt.