

A handsome face could mean lower semen quality

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Frontal and right side lateral view of male face. Prior to attractiveness ratings, color photographs were scanned, and an oval mask was placed over the image to minimize the visual effect of hairstyle. Credit: *Journal of Evolutionary Biology*

Contrary to what one might expect, facial masculinity was negatively associated with semen quality in a recent *Journal of Evolutionary Biology* study.

As increased levels of testosterone have been demonstrated to impair sperm production, this finding may indicate a trade-off between

investments in secondary sexual signaling (i.e. facial masculinity) and fertility.

Interestingly, males estimated [facial images](#) generally more attractive than females did, suggesting that males may generally overestimate the attractiveness of other men to females.

More information: Soler, C., Kekäläinen, J., Núñez, M., Sancho, M., Álvarez, J. G., Núñez, J., Yaber, I. and Gutiérrez, R. (2014), Male facial attractiveness and masculinity may provide sex- and culture-independent cues to semen quality. *Journal of Evolutionary Biology*, 27: 1930. [DOI: 10.1111/jeb.12446](#)

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