

Handle with care: A guide to safely using smelling salts

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

Matt Sheehan – Media Relations Coordinator

BROADCAST SCRIPT

WINNING A SPORTING EVENT CAN COME DOWN TO THE LAST SECOND – OR EVEN JUST A COUPLE OF INCHES.

AND ATHLETES LOOK FOR WHATEVER MIGHT GIVEN THEM THE EDGE AGAINST THEIR OPPONENTS. ONE EXAMPLE: SMELLING SALTS – A TREND THAT IS MAKING THE ROUNDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

TAKE VO

AMMONIA INHALANTS – COMMONLY KNOWN AS SMELLING SALTS – ARE BOTTLED POWDERS OR PACKETS USED TO AROUSE CONCIIOUSNESS. THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF SPORTS MEDICINE REPORTS THE RELEASE OF AMMONIA GAS IRRITATES THE MEMBRANES OF THE NOSE AND LUNGS... WHICH TRIGGERS AN INHALATION REFLEX.

ATHLETES USE THIS AS AN ADDED BURST OF ENERGY BEFORE HITTING THE FIELD... AND BODY BUILDERS MAY USE THIS BEFORE A MAX-WEIGHT LIFT IN THE GYM.

DR. **CURR-IN RYE** KARAN RAI – A SPORTS MEDICINE PHYSICIAN WITH OSF HEALTHCARE – SAYS WHILE SMELLING SALTS CAN INCREASE YOUR HEART RATE AND GIVE YOU A SENSE OF MORE ENERGY... IT'S USUALLY MORE OF A PLACEBO EFFECT.

TAKE SOT

“Smelling salts can be part of someone’s routine or superstition, prior to performing a maximal lift in the weight room or before participating in an athletic competition. That has shown routines and superstitions help you get more prepared and more focused.”

VO TAG

FOR THE MOST PART – DR. RAI SAYS THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT HEALTH RISKS TO ATHLETES USING SMELLING SALTS. HIS BIGGEST CONCERN IS THAT IF YOU DO USE THEM – DON’T INGEST THEM AND DON’T HOLD THEM TOO CLOSE TO YOUR NOSE.