





What is Video Game **Addiction?**

ideo game addiction is viewed by psychologists as an impulse control disorder. Statistics show that men and boys are more likely to become addicted to video games versus women and girls. Recent research has found that nearly one in 10 youth gamers (ages 8-18) can be classified as pathological gamers or addicted to video-gaming.

Symptoms of Video Game Addiction

Someone who is addicted to computer, video, or Internet gaming often exhibits an unusual preoccupation with the game or computer when he is away from it. The person may make excuses, saying he "needs" to be online, or may outright lie. A person who is addicted, or at risk of becoming addicted to gaming, is unable to control the amount of time he spends on the computer.

Because the person spends so much time on the computer or video game console, other areas of life are neglected. He may grow distant from friends and family who had previously been close. Homework may go unfinished, causing grades to slip.

Some people become addicted to gaming because they use it to self-medicate. When confronted with situations or feelings that are uncomfortable (feeling sad, arguing with a friend, or getting a bad grade), the person may "hide" in the game as a method of avoidance.

When confronted or asked about his time spent gaming, a person may become defensive. Denial is often an indication that something is wrong.

Causes of Addiction to Video Games

• The design: One of the main reasons that video games can become so addictive, is that they are designed to be that way. They accomplish this by making a game just challenging enough to keep you coming back for more but not so hard that the player eventually gives up. In this respect, video game addiction is very similar to another more widely recognized disorder: gambling addiction.

The perfect escape: Many adults feel . overwhelmed by their responsibilities. Everyone needs time to relax, unwind, and take their minds off real life. For gamers, it's the fantasy world that makes them feel better. The lure of a fantasy world is especially pertinent to online role-playing games.

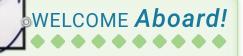
Withdrawal Symptoms

There are withdrawal symptoms when the video game practice is stopped: anxiety, irritability, difficulty focusing, loss of interest, change of sleep, obsessive thoughts about the games...They may last several weeks or months. With abstinence from gaming and working a program of recovery, the symptoms fade over time.

It takes approximately a few months for the brain to recover from the effect of video game addiction. However many people can think and function better after being off games for a short time.

Knowing the severe effects of video game addiction, it is very important to consider the symptoms as warning signs, in order to protect our loved ones from the potential danger of this disorder.

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