How Far is Internet responsible for a decrease in Teenage Health?

Internet Addiction [GP Project]

Vatsal

2012

The Internet has connected the world in new ways never before thought possible. It is like a wonderful store that stays open all night long. Whenever you are on, someone is always up answer your questions. Any type of information is at your fingertips. If you can't find it in a book, you are assured that you will find it on the Internet. You can also find almost any product or service that you can think of in cyberspace. Teens are using the Internet as an outlet for their lives and getting lost there.

In this report, you will learn "How far is Internet Responsible for a decrease in health and how bad it really can be?"

I chose this topic as I am very much addicted to internet and social networking. By choosing this topic, I will get to know the effects and dangers of using internet more than needed. On Computer and Internet we seem to drift away very easily, and lose focus on our work. In today's society, the Internet has made its way into almost every home, and is a well-known fact that the web is a valuable asset for research and learning. Unfortunately, it can be a very dangerous place for teens. Internet addiction is a devastating problem like more and more are recognizing this vicious behaviour and even, the potential mental effects facing far too many teens and their families. These all lead to decrease in teenage health, and teen years are very important; most of the habits and development for their adult life takes place during these years also known as adolescence.

There are kids who would rather be outside in the fresh air than cooped up in the house sitting in front of the tube. These are the teens that are most at risk for Internet addiction. There are problems in their real lives that they would rather leave behind. It could be a <u>difficult home situation: divorce, abuse, miscommunication, neglect or even boredom</u>.

As parents work more and more to make ends meet in the tough economy, kids are left to their own devices after school. Lack of supervision can always begin a way for disaster. Even more than that is the fact that these kids feel alone. The problem could be at school. They have no friends or are different from others also fitting in and grades are troubles for them.

Teens are more susceptible to outside influences such as those on the Internet. From teenage years to the age of eighteen, they are in a brutal search for who they really are and what that means for their future. They go through many phases and stages in this process. People and places they find on the Internet can also lead them to change in ways that can be dangerous.

Signs of Teens suffering from Internet Addiction

- Spending long hours on the Internet. Losing track of time when they are "on."
- Feelings of guilt for spending so much time on the Internet
- Spending less and less time communicating with family and friends in favour of online chat rooms and websites
- Problems at school or dropping grades as a result of time spent on the Internet
- Sneaking around to get connected
- Attitude changes when told that they can't spend as much time as they want on the Internet
- Always asking to use the computer instead of participating in other activities

Teens do occasionally become withdrawn because that is what they do. At the first sign, take note of any other changes in behaviour. Alone it may mean nothing, but if they are spending plenty of time on the computer it could be Internet addiction. They are allowed to have some leisure time and surf for clothing, entertainment or to chat with friends, but they will still remain well adjusted otherwise.

By: Vatsal Sagparia

2012

Symptoms of the Internet Addiction on Teenage Health

Whenever you see your child, they are always on the computer. This can be the beginning of the problem. A laptop is easily mobile. When you look for it and your child has it behind closed doors, it can be another warning sign. Teens may even forget to eat at times. Another symptom is trouble completing household tasks and handling responsibility. Do you have to ask more than once for them to clean their rooms or pick up their clothes? Even when they do complete their household tasks it is done quickly so that they can get back to the computer.

Physically, the symptoms may be harder to spot if you are not keenly aware of the changes in your child. They can develop carpal tunnel syndrome from the repetitive motions that come with playing online games and typing messages in chat rooms. Sleep patterns are erratic because they stay up longer or get up earlier to have uninterrupted time on the computer.

Other physical changes include:

- **Poor hygiene**
- **Lack of appetite**
- **Headaches from staring at the computer screen**
- **Back pain**

- **Eye issues**

Visual problems are reported by users, the most common are eyestrain, double vision, temporary short-sightedness and visual fatigue. The term eyestrain alone can cover a range of symptoms, including irritation, soreness, photosensitivity and general tiredness

- **Sedentary Lifestyle**

In 2002, the World Health Organization listed inactivity, or sedentary lifestyle, as one of the 10 leading global causes of death and disability. A sedentary lifestyle includes sitting, reading, watching television and using a computer for much of the day with little or no vigorous exercise. As expected, the lifestyle contributes to obesity and cardiovascular disease.

- **Blood Clot and Disturbed Metabolism**

A report by Statistics Canada also suggested that "screen time" — the number of hours a day spent watching television or sitting in front of a computer — should be considered a distinct contributing factor to obesity, in addition to physical inactivity and diet.
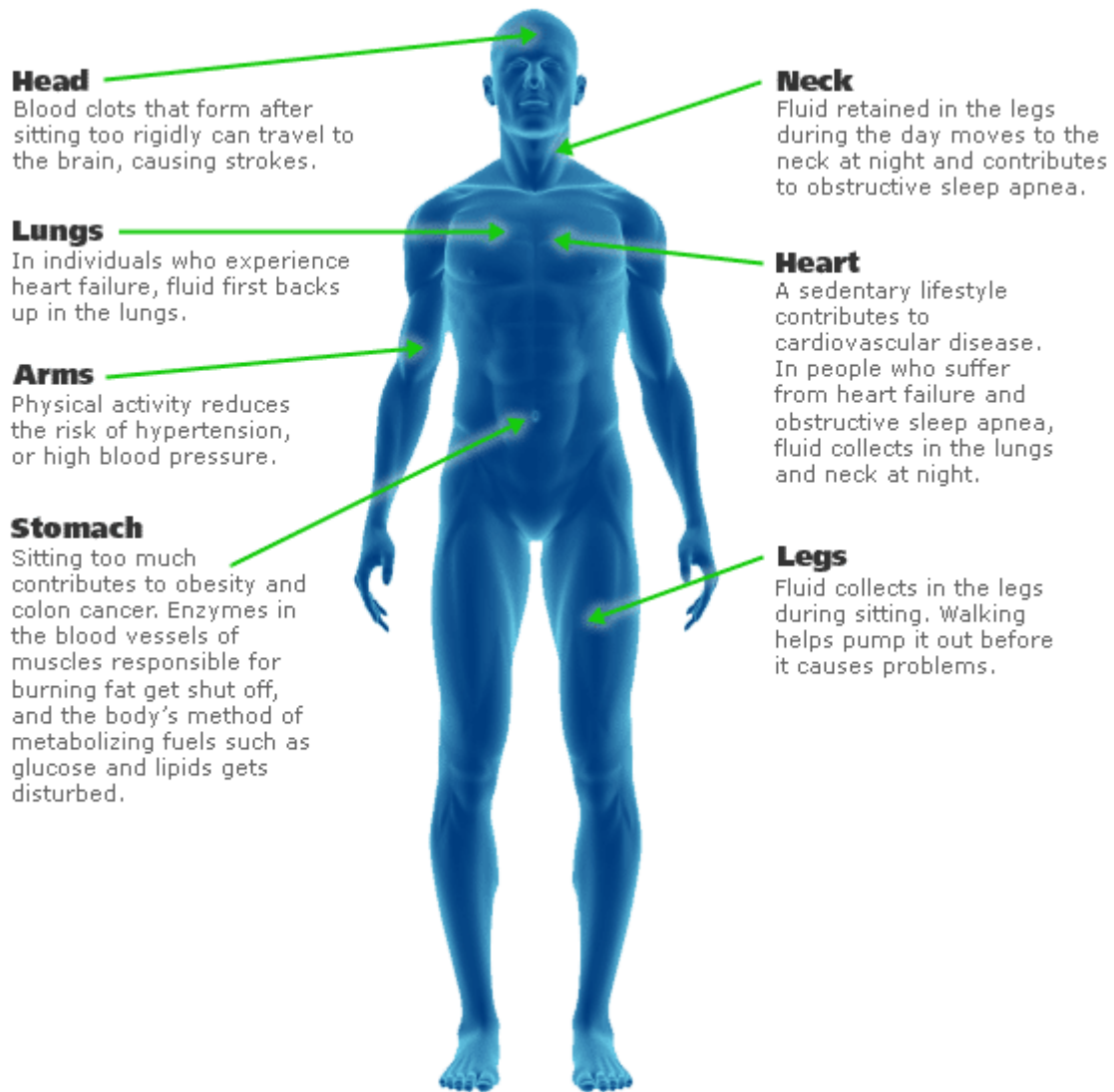
- **Why is the time we spend sitting so important to our health?**

One reason is that excessive sitting can lead to blood clots, like those that afflict some airline passengers. Deep-vein thrombosis, or DVT, is thought to be caused by sitting rigidly for too long. A blood clot forms in leg veins and travels to the lungs or heart or brain days or weeks later, where it can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Enzymes in the blood vessels of muscles responsible for burning fat also get shut off within hours of not moving.

Using the internet also poses threats to our mental health:

- Computer rage – users are frustrated with the computer and the internet.
- Internet addiction – people becoming dependent on the internet.
- Fragmentation of society – people losing communication skills due to using the internet all the time. They lose their friends and become withdrawn from society

How Sitting Too Long Affects the Body

Head
Blood clots that form after sitting too rigidly can travel to the brain, causing strokes.

Lungs
In individuals who experience heart failure, fluid first backs up in the lungs.

Arms
Physical activity reduces the risk of hypertension, or high blood pressure.

Stomach
Sitting too much contributes to obesity and colon cancer. Enzymes in the blood vessels of muscles responsible for burning fat get shut off, and the body's method of metabolizing fuels such as glucose and lipids gets disturbed.

Neck
Fluid retained in the legs during the day moves to the neck at night and contributes to obstructive sleep apnea.

Heart
A sedentary lifestyle contributes to cardiovascular disease. In people who suffer from heart failure and obstructive sleep apnea, fluid collects in the lungs and neck at night.

Legs
Fluid collects in the legs during sitting. Walking helps pump it out before it causes problems.

Possible Scenarios of Overuse of Internet

If the overuse of internet continues then the teens will get affected by internet and will suffer from many disorders. More and more teens will have eye disorders such as myopia and they will be obese due to physical inactivity and diet. In adolescence your life when you get mentally and physically developed for the rest of your life and it has to be handled properly. Your mental behaviour and your physical health both develop during this age and internet affects both. Due to

By: Vatsal Sagparia

2012

this, many parents who freely allowed their kids to use internet will not allow them in the future. And teenage life will have many difficulties to reach ahead in their life

Possible Courses of action due to overuse of internet, Parents are always worried about their child. Internet safety is the important issue in the parenting world. The parents fear their child becoming a computer addict. There are several things that parents can do as guardians, to control their teen's time on the internet. They can understand what the teen needs and must set time limits for them. They can inform their teen not to give any personal info on the internet, even small things such as naming a friend, telephone number and school. Parents can regularly review their teen's histories and logs of the computer and enforce the use of "Parental Control". There are various methods by which a parent can control the internet usage.

Some ways through which internet addiction can be cured are:

- Place reasonable limits on computer usage. Decide a reasonable time based upon your daily schedule. In the case of children, an hour on school days and two hours on weekends are reasonable limits.
- Also there are softwares which limit your child to certain harmful sites and also of that does not delete your history etc.
- Strengthen your support network between you and your teen. The more relationships you have in real life, the less you will need the Internet for social interaction. Set aside dedicated time each week for friends and family. If you are shy, try finding common interest groups such as a sports team, education class, or book reading club. This allows you to interact with others and let relationships develop naturally.
- Replace your Internet usage with healthy activities. If you are bored and lonely, resisting the urge to get back online can be very difficult. Have a plan for other ways to fill the time.

This was the part for our parents, but at the same time, we must also reduce the time we spend on the internet, being able to socialize, entertain ourselves on the internet is good only for a specific period of time, overuse can cause us problems. I, myself will reduce the internet usage as I got to know its dreadful effects and the way it can affect our well-being.

Conclusion

Using the internet has many problems for people, especially who have mental problems, as well as for their family, friends, caregivers, policy makers and for the service providers. There are so many websites that cater to those who have mental problems. Using the internet also lessens the disgrace of people with mental problems which they face every day because of their condition. Although the internet obviously connects people to one another, it should not be made an alternative for personal or face to face interaction with other people. You can have a part in developing the internet by promoting positive mental health to users.