

What are the symptoms?

The behaviors that we hear most often reported in our clinical experience include:

For kids

- Most of non-school hours are spent on the computer or playing video games.
- Falling asleep in school.
- Not keeping up with assignments.
- Worsening grades.
- Lying about computer or video game use.
- Choosing to use the computer or play video games, rather than see friends.
- Dropping out of social groups (clubs or sports) in order to play games.
- Stealing money in order to buy or play games.
- Irritable when not playing a video game or on the computer.
- Unsuccessful attempts to cut back on game play.

For adults

- Computer or video game use is characterized by intense feelings of pleasure and guilt.
- Obsessing and pre-occupied about being on the computer, even when not connected.
- Hours playing video games or on the computer increasing, seriously disrupting family, social or even work life.
- Lying about computer or video game use.
- Experience feelings of withdrawal, anger, or depression when not on the computer or involved with their video game.
- May incur large phone or credit bills for on-line services.
- Can't control computer or video game use.
- Fantasy life on-line replaces emotional life with partner.

Physical symptoms of addiction

- Carpal tunnel syndrome or other repetitive stress injuries
- Sleep disturbances
- Back, neck aches
- Headaches
- Dry eyes
- Failure to eat regularly
- Neglect of personal hygiene