

## Proposed Diagnostic Criteria for Computer Addiction

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### Introduction

Computer addiction is a growing public health concern, characterized by excessive and compulsive use of computers, leading to significant negative impacts on individuals' lives. This paper proposes diagnostic criteria for computer addiction, aiming to provide a standardized framework for clinical diagnosis and research. The criteria are based on a comprehensive review of existing literature and clinical observations, focusing on the core features of computer addiction, including loss of control, withdrawal symptoms, and significant impairment in social, academic, and occupational functioning.

#### Prevalence:

Computer addiction research indicates a rising prevalence of computer addiction among young people, particularly in urban areas and among those with high internet usage. The prevalence is estimated to be around 10-15% in some studies, with higher rates observed in specific populations and settings.

#### Risk factors:

Several risk factors are associated with computer addiction, including personality traits such as impulsivity and low self-esteem, social isolation, and excessive use of technology. Environmental factors like family structure and peer influence also play a role in the development of computer addiction.

#### Comorbidity:

Computer addiction is often comorbid with other mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. The presence of these comorbidities can exacerbate the symptoms of computer addiction and complicate the diagnostic process.

#### Treatment approaches:

The treatment of computer addiction involves a combination of psychological and behavioral interventions. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a primary approach, focusing on identifying and modifying maladaptive thought patterns and behaviors related to computer use. Other approaches include group therapy, family therapy, and self-help programs.

#### Prevention and education:

Prevention and education are crucial in reducing the risk of computer addiction. This involves promoting healthy digital habits, such as setting limits on screen time and encouraging offline activities. Educational programs for children and adolescents can help them develop a balanced relationship with technology from an early age.

#### Gaming disorder:

Gaming disorder is a specific form of computer addiction characterized by excessive and compulsive gaming. It is recognized as a distinct condition in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), highlighting the need for specific diagnostic criteria and treatment approaches for this population.

### Computer addiction research effects on young people

Computer addiction research has shown significant effects on young people, including increased risk of mental health problems, social isolation, and academic or occupational impairment. The research also highlights the need for targeted interventions and support for this vulnerable population.

As the prevalence of computer addiction continues to rise, it is essential to explore the underlying mechanisms and develop effective strategies for prevention and treatment. This research provides a foundation for further studies and clinical practice, aiming to improve the lives of individuals affected by computer addiction.

#### Social isolation:

Computer addiction can lead to social isolation, as individuals spend more time online and less time interacting with others in person. This isolation can further exacerbate mental health issues and contribute to the cycle of addiction.

#### Mental health issues:

Computer addiction is strongly linked to mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and stress. The constant stimulation and feedback from digital devices can lead to mood swings and emotional instability, affecting overall mental well-being.

#### Sleep disturbances:

Excessive computer use, particularly at night, can disrupt sleep patterns and lead to sleep disturbances. This is due to the blue light emitted by screens, which can interfere with the body's natural circadian rhythm and melatonin production.

#### Physical health problems:

Computer addiction can also have physical health consequences, such as eye strain, neck pain, and repetitive strain injuries. Prolonged sitting and lack of physical activity contribute to these health issues.

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