



Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/6720
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/6720>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INTERNET ADDICTION AND ITS SOLUTION THROUGH AYURVEDA.

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 10 January 2018
 Final Accepted: 12 February 2018
 Published: March 2018

Keywords:-

Internet addiction, mental health,
 ayurveda.

Abstract

Internet addiction is an emerging disease of a new world. Many of the people who are using smartphones are addicted to internet usage. This problem is not only interfering with their daily routine but disturbing sleep pattern and sometimes psychological behavior also. Ill mental health imparts a significant effect on their physical health. The condition is going to be so worse day by day that now affected persons are seeking medical advice for this problem. Ayurveda, however, does not have the description of this problem in its ancient text but can help in treating such people by using their basic techniques of rehabilitation and mental health solutions.

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Introduction:-

Internet addiction is defined as any online-related, compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones, and one's work environment. Internet addiction has been called Internet dependency and Internet compulsivity¹. By any name, it is a compulsive behavior that completely dominates the addict's life. Use of the Internet is a contributing factor in nearly 50% of all relationship and family problems². 11% of the people going on-line are becoming compulsive or addicted. Internet addiction is negatively affecting personal relationship with family, friends and significant others, as well as better work productivity³. It can also have a physical impact like severe headache, carpal tunnel syndrome, eating disorders and sleeping problems⁴.

Aims and objectives:-

1. To identify internet addictions and select the appropriate methods for helping people with this addiction seek help.
2. To be able to help people make proper choices when dealing with digital health and wellness.

Advantages of the Internet use

1. Part of an everyday life
2. Unlimited source of information
3. Knowledge
4. News
5. "Staying in touch" with people
6. Remote access
7. Relationship with physically separated people
8. Way of earning money:

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Disadvantages of the Internet excessive use:-

1. Relationship problems
2. Sense of loneliness and isolation
3. Depression or general unhappiness
4. Necessity to show yourself in the best way
5. Turning into introverts
6. Neglecting family activities, social events, work, and school.

Risk groups⁵:-

1. Anyone using the internet for more than two hours a day outside work commitments.
2. Teenagers and children who use the internet unmonitored.
3. Women and men in their mid-50s suffering from the loneliness of an “empty nest.”

Risk factors⁶:-

1. Personality: impulse control, self esteem, introversion, patterns of tension reduction,
2. Disposition for addictive behavior upon stimuli (award dependence).
3. Inner emptiness, isolation, emotional burnout, neglect of rewarding interpersonal relationships.
4. Presence of harmful material (just a click away in the Internet)
5. Dealing with hidden emotional pain.
6. History of childhood trauma / neglect.
7. Pathological search for new stimulation.
8. Lack of inner discipline / behavioral control
9. Rationalising negative behavior.: „This helps me to relax“ – „, I owe myself a treat“ – „It’s only pictures“ etc.
10. Unrealistic expectations towards others, sexual partners, emotional immaturity.

Areas with addictive potential⁷:-

1. Internet pornography
2. Chat
3. Online-Games
4. Internet-Gambling
5. Online-shopping
6. Information addiction

Warning Signs⁸:-

1. Loss of control when trying to stop or limit the amount of time on the internet.
2. Breaking promises to self or others.
3. Dishonest about internet activities or minimizing the extent of the time you stay on the internet.
4. Feelings of euphoria and Feelings of guilt brought on by either the inordinate amount of time spent on the internet.
5. Feelings of depression or anxiety when something or someone shortens your time or interrupts your plans to use the internet.
6. Unacceptable behaviors when using the internet.
7. Compromising morals values based on the opportunity to remain anonymous and protected on the internet.

Internet addiction disorder (IAD)⁹:-

1. Internet addiction disorder (IAD) is excessive computer use that interferes with daily life.
2. IAD was originally proposed as a disorder by Ivan Goldberg in 1995.
3. He took pathological gambling as diagnosed by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) as his model for the description of IAD.

Physical symptoms:-

1. Dry eyes
2. Chronic headaches and migraine
3. Neglected personal hygiene
4. Irregular and unhealthy eating habits
5. Insomnia or disturbed sleep patterns

Psychological symptoms¹⁰:-

1. Having a sense of well-being when online.
2. Thinking obsessively about the Internet or having preoccupations going online.
3. Feeling empty, depressed, anxious, or irritable when offline or unable to go online.
4. Having less interest in, or spending less time on, activities offline.
5. Having relationship problems (with boyfriend/girlfriend, family and friends).
6. Lying about Internet use (time spent, online activities, etc.).
7. Decline in study habits.
8. Significant drop in grades.
9. Missed classes.

How Can You Help:-

You can and you should supervise computer/internet activity and get help from one of the following resources if he or she needs it:

1. Counselor
2. Social worker
3. Psychologist
4. Ayurveda Physician???

**Acknowledge your addiction:-**

1. Acknowledge that your habit is an addiction, which requires consequent action.
2. Change your routine to spend less time on the Internet. For example, if you normally go online as soon as you get up, start showering and having breakfast before going online.
3. Spend more time doing fun activities with your friends' offline.
4. Share your addiction with your wife, a friend or a counselor.
5. Keep your computer in a public room of the house. Keep certain times to access the computer to ensure control.

Live without the internet!:-

1. Choose to live without a computer or internet access for some time.
2. Attend a self-help group to learn with other addicts about strategies how to deal with your addiction.
3. **Facebook Detoxification** (संशोधन चिकित्सा): Log out from facebook from few hours to full day.
4. Uninstall social networking apps from your mobile.

Limit access (निदान परिवर्जन):-

1. For your own well-being, set a time limit when you start doing online activities.
2. At night, store your electronic devices outside your bedroom.

For Children:-

1. Encourage other interests and social activities.
2. Get the child out from behind the computer screen.
3. Expose kids to other hobbies and activities, such as team sports, Boy or Girl Scouts, and afterschool clubs.

Strategies to keep from Falling:-**Watch your spiritual health:-**

Lapses in the spiritual disciplines of meditation, worship, prayer and healthy self-examination are certain to spell trouble.

Guard your marriage:-

Regularly evaluate your relationship with your spouse, keeping him or her involved in what happens in your ministry world.

Take adequate precautions:-

If you find yourself thinking more about ways to be with a co-worker than with your spouse, set strict parameters about that working relationship. Avoid meeting alone with him or her.

Understand subtle signs of sexual attraction:-

Exchanging notes and gifts, holding hands tightly in prayer, allowing the arm to linger just a bit longer on the shoulder, offering embraces more often—these may denote a relationship veering into dangerous territory.

Back off early:-

When you realize a counselee has become interested in you personally, it is time to refer that person to someone else.

Maintain clarity in your thinking:-

Never justify flirting, and never disclose to another person that you have lustful thoughts about them.

Make yourself accountable:-

Don't try to be a lone ranger leader.

Guard your thought life:-

"Our thoughts are the fabric with which we weave our character and destiny." With good reason Paul encourages believers to keep their minds focused on things that are noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy (*Philippians 4:8*).

Ayurveda for Internet addiction:-

Ayurveda, the Science of Longevity, is the indigenous system of medicine in India. The body of knowledge that comes under the heading *Ayurveda* constitutes ideas about diseases, diagnosis and cure, which have been accumulated over the ages past. According to *Charaka*, a noted practitioner of *Ayurveda* in ancient India: "A physician who fails to enter the body of a patient with the lamp of knowledge and understanding can never treat diseases. He should first study all the factors, including environment, which influence a patient's disease, and then prescribe treatment. It is more important to prevent the occurrence of disease than to seek a cure". Concepts of ayurveda deals human body as whole. It provides treatment of *sharir* and *mana* both. Nature has big potency to cure. *Ashwagandha*, *Brahmi*, *Amalki*, *Shankhpushpi*, *Tulsi*, *Haridra*, *Kutki* etc. along with *shiro dhara* & *shiro basti*, *nasya*, *shiro abhyanga*, *padabhyang*, *marma chikitsa*, *alabu karma*, Yoga, *pranayam* and naturopathy are very effective in treating such disorders.

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