



Video Game Addiction

We often associate addictions with substances, but behaviors can be addictive as well. When a person is addicted, they need more and more of the substance or behavior to keep going, and if the person does not get more of it, they become irritable and miserable.

For a person who is addicted to video games, they become angry, violent or depressed when the gaming system is taken away, often times refusing to eat or sleep until the game has been returned. Unlike substance addiction, the biological aspect of gaming addiction is uncertain. The research suggests that both gambling and gaming elevate levels of dopamine in the brain. But, as with other addictions, it is more than just brain chemistry — the gamer is trying to change the way they feel by partaking in something that is outside of themselves. It is the fantasy world the game creates that allows a player to become the dominant superpower that they are not in real life.



How much video game playing is too much? If you answer yes to 4 or more of the following statements, it may suggest that your child is playing too much.

- Plays video games everyday
- Plays video games instead of doing homework
- Often plays for long periods of time (3 or more hours)
- Plays for excitement
- Gets restless and irritable if unable to play
- Sacrifices social or sporting activities to play

If you are concerned that your child may be addicted, begin by documenting the severity; log the amount of time that your child is playing video games. Note any problems that arise as a result of telling your child their video gaming time is over. Document increases in anger/violence, difficulties getting up in the morning, and participation in both the educational setting as well as in social activities. If your child is playing video games for increasing amounts of time, this may be of concern. Children who play 4 or more hours a day have no time for doing homework, socializing or partaking in physical activity; all of these experiences are important for healthy growth and development. Set time limits, share them with your child and adhere to them. Know what games, and the content that is in the games, your children are playing. Discourage solitary game playing and encourage your child to use their limited video game time playing with another person or as a group. Lastly, remember that video games are NOT bad, they can have educational value, can help raise self esteem and increase reaction speed. As with most things in life, moderation is the key.

(Sources: Gambling & Gaming Addiction in Adolescents by Mark Griffiths; www.webmd.com/videogamingaddictions)

What's Influencing Your Kids?

Rising in popularity after being sensationalized in pop culture, **"Molly"**, aka molecule, is becoming a substance that young people are not only talking about, but also trying. Referenced by popular musical artists such as Madonna, who at a 2012 music festival asked the crowd, primarily made up of high school and college students, if any of them had seen "Molly... the one who will make you so happy and ready to dance." Kanye West references Molly in lyrics to a new song called *Mercy*, "Something 'bout Mary she GONE off that Molly, now the whole party be melted." Nicki Minaj makes reference to Molly in her 2012 song *Beez in the Trap*, "Got your girl Molly and we be smokin' loud and drinkin'."



Molly is the pure powder or crystal form of MDMA, a chemical most commonly laced with methamphetamine or caffeine in the production of ecstasy. Molly is both a stimulant and a psychedelic. Those who are under the influence will be smiley, appear spaced out, giddy or confused. Muscle tension, teeth clenching, muscle cramping, profuse sweating and blurred vision often occur with the use of Molly.



Molly is generally inhaled, eaten or parachuted. Parachuting is a way to ingest powder without snorting. The powder is placed in the middle of 1-ply tissue, then a little "pocket" is made and twisted at the top — looking like a bigger version of the July 4th Pop-it-Snappers. The tissue is then placed at the back of the throat and the whole pocket is swallowed. The tissue dissolves rather quickly, and by the time the powder reaches the stomach, it is absorbed rapidly and the MDMA enters the blood stream; thereby achieving the high faster than waiting for a pill coating to dissolve.

The high lasts on average 3-6 hours. While under the influence, the individual will appear extremely happy; however that quickly changes as use depletes the body of vital neurotransmitters, and a deep depression has been known to follow in the days after use.

(Sources: www.cnn.com/mollymdmadrug, 8/16/12; www.drugfree.org/molly, 3/2/13)



Bath Salts Mixed with Spice have created a "Frankenmolecule"

Researchers have run across what is believed to be the first example of a hybrid synthetic drug that is a combination of methamphetamine-related cathinone (bath salts) and an entirely new synthetic cannabinoid (Spice) in what is being referred to as a "Frankenmolecule."

In the study, recently published in *Forensic Science International*, investigators conducted a new round of drug buying on the Internet, identifying 12 more new synthetic cannabinoids that have not previously been seen. Oddly, a new type of designer drug was also identified — a new synthetic cannabis compound packaged together with a cathinone derivative. Even more surprising, the scientists discovered that these two chemicals had blended to create a third, completely new combination drug, a freak admixture, half fake marijuana, half designer amphetamine.

Concern has been expressed about the reactive nature of both compounds. The recent trend seems to be to mix different types of designer drugs such as cathinones (stimulants) or tryptamines (hallucinogens) with synthetic cannabinoids, therefore there is the potential for serious health risks associated with their use. Without sophisticated lab analysis of bath salt and spice products, the ability to know what you are actually taking has fallen to virtually zero.

Bath salts, made from chemical compounds similar to amphetamine, may cause users to experience hallucinations, paranoia, confusion, rapid heartbeat, nausea, dizziness, kidney pain...and even death.

Spice, of which K2 has been a popular brand, refers to a variety of herbal mixtures sprayed with chemicals to mimic marijuana (cannabis). Users may experience hallucinations, seizures, vomiting, anxiety and an accelerated heart rate.

The DEA, reporting on the national counts of exposure calls to poison control centers, show the number of calls related to synthetic cathinones went from 0 (zero) in January 2010 to 749 in June 2011, and the number of calls related to synthetic cannabinoids went from 24 in January 2010 to 643 in June 2011; clearly showing that something is causing an increase in drug-related toxic reactions lately.

(Source: addiction-dirkh.blogspot.com, 02/2013)

SCIP SIDE LINE

Prescription Drug Take Back

The fourth DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for April 27, 2013, 10am-2pm.



SCIP staff will again partner with the Lincoln Police Department to staff collection sites, provide information on prescription drug abuse, and raise community awareness of the SCIP Program.

At the last Take Back in October, 6,203 lbs. of unused or expired prescription medications were collected throughout the state.

For more information, or to inquire about hosting a collection site in your area, contact your local law enforcement agency or go to the DEA's website:

www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html

SCIP Intervention & Prevention Training

The annual SCIP Intervention & Prevention Training for 2013 is scheduled for July 9-12 in Lincoln.

The trainings are for new SCIP Teams, school staff new to an existing SCIP Team, as a refresher for current members, or any other interested community member.

More information and registration forms will be sent out in April.

Caffeine "To Go"

Getting those extra shots of caffeine has become even easier with energy drinks now being sold as flavored powders in single serving pouches that can be mixed with water. With names like UltraShot, Pure Kick, and Power Edge, these packets can contain significantly higher amounts of caffeine than coffee or tea — as much as 200, 300, or more, milligrams per packet. With multiple packets being easier to carry than cans, the potential to use several packets at once is worrisome. Excessive caffeine use can cause serious side effects such as elevated blood pressure, heart palpitations, anxiety, and an increased risk of dehydration. Additionally, because of the high levels of other vitamins, you may also exceed safe levels of those as well, raising the risk of various types of toxicity to your body. Blast Caffeine is a powder that comes in a 4.5oz. shaker that fits in your jeans pocket. It can be sprinkled on any food or beverage. It boasts it takes 125 energy drinks to match the caffeine in 1 container of Blast. One shake equals one cup of coffee, but the danger lies with several shakes.

Trips to the emergency room continue to rise — so much so that doctors are being urged to talk to their young patients about the dangers. Approximately 42% of ER cases in 2011 involved energy drinks mixed with either alcohol or other medications such as Ritalin or Adderall, with the majority of hospital visits being teenagers and young adults.

Caffeine can also be habit forming. In low doses it can be fine, but when you have it in high doses, that's where you get a problem, serving more as a stimulant than an energy pick-me-up. It can be like any addictive behavior — are there withdrawal symptoms? Can you put it down, walk away and not think about it? When you can't go a day without it, there's a problem.

(Sources: tuftsdaily.com; doctoroz.com; medicalnewstoday.com, 020613; blastcaffeine.com)

