



Gaming disorder

Online Q&A
September 2018

What is gaming disorder?

Gaming disorder is defined in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as a pattern of gaming behavior (“digital-gaming” or “video-gaming”) characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other interests and daily activities, and continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences.

For gaming disorder to be diagnosed, the behaviour pattern must be of sufficient severity to result in significant impairment in personal, family, social, educational, occupational or other important areas of functioning and would normally have been evident for at least 12 months.

What is the International Classification of Diseases?

The International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is the basis for identification of health trends and statistics globally and the international standard for reporting diseases and health conditions. It is used by medical practitioners around the world to diagnose conditions and by researchers to categorize conditions.

The inclusion of a disorder in ICD is a consideration which countries take into account when planning public health strategies and monitoring trends of disorders.

WHO released the 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) in mid-2018.

Why is gaming disorder being included in ICD-11?

A decision on inclusion of gaming disorder in ICD-11 is based on reviews of available evidence and reflects a consensus of experts from different disciplines and geographical regions that were involved in the process of technical consultations undertaken by WHO in the process of ICD-11 development.

The inclusion of gaming disorder in ICD-11 follows the development of treatment programmes for people with health conditions identical to those characteristic of gaming disorder in many parts of the world, and will result in the increased attention of health professionals to the risks of development of this disorder and, accordingly, to relevant prevention and treatment measures.

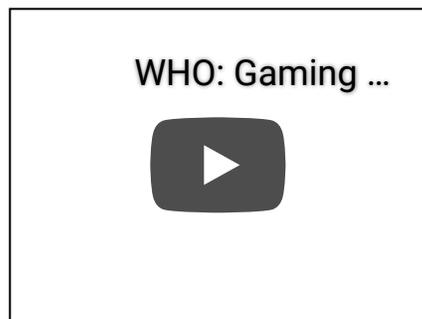
Should all people who engage in gaming be concerned about developing gaming disorder?

Studies suggest that gaming disorder affects only a small proportion of people who engage in digital- or video-gaming activities. However, people who partake in gaming should be alert to the amount of time they spend on gaming activities, particularly when it is to the exclusion of other daily activities, as well as to any changes in their physical or psychological health and social functioning that could be attributed to their pattern of gaming behaviour.

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