

Healthy Habit...or Addiction?

Signs of Exercise Addiction

Signs and Symptoms

- Training even when injured or tired.
- Working out several times a day.
- Obsessing about training details.
- Feeling angry or threatened when training routine is interrupted.
- Canceling or avoiding social activities and other responsibilities in order to exercise.
- Creating a daily schedule around working out.
- Repeated comments about being or feeling fat.
- Feeling anxiety and guilt when unable to exercise.
- Happiness reliant on the productivity of workout.



The Facts

- Studies suggest that participants in sports that emphasize appearance and lean bodies are at a high risk for developing eating disorders.
- Eating disorders are significant problems in sports such as dance (specifically ballet), figure skating, running, gymnastics, swimming, rowing, horse racing and riding, as well as wrestling, but can occur in any sport or exercise program.
- Exercise addiction can cause people to sacrifice the needs of their family, friends, loved ones, career, as well as social opportunities and responsibilities.
- Exercise addiction can cause chronic fatigue and depression, and may lead to serious bodily harm such as dehydration, stress fractures, reproductive problems, heart problems and even death.
- Individuals who are addicted to exercise are also likely to show symptoms of eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia.

How can I help?

If you or someone you know exhibits symptoms of exercise addiction, consider contacting MEDA for help and support. Be positive. You can fully recover from an eating disorder.

There are many places to turn for help on your campus. If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, consider contacting any of the following:

Residence Hall Staff
Health Services

Faculty Member
Coach

Counseling Center
Physician

Information compiled from Kathy Hotelling's, Ph. D. "Eating Disorders on Campus" by the Multi-service Eating Disorder Association, Inc. Copyright © 2002 [MEDA] All rights reserved