

PRESS RELEASE

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Unprecedented rates of sexual dysfunctions in young men may be related to internet porn use

New studies by medical doctors in Europe and the US raise concerns

Ardmore, PA (September 1st 2016) The Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health cautions that doctors in Europe and the United States are concerned about the possible effects of internet porn use on men's sexual health.

Two journals released articles last month suggesting that sexual dysfunctions during partnered sex, such as difficulty climaxing (delayed ejaculation and anorgasmia), unreliable or absent erections (erectile dysfunction), and problematic low sexual desire for partnered sex, may be associated with internet porn use, and therefore often reversible with a change in habits.

In a paper published online on August 16, 2016 in *Sexologies*, psychiatrist Robert Porto, MD, President of the European Federation of Sexology, notes that masturbation is generally harmless. However, when excessive and accompanied by cyber-pornography use, it "has been seen to play a role in the etiology of certain types of erectile dysfunction or coital anejaculation."

The study reports on 35 patients with these dysfunctions. 19 of them experienced improvements after treatment to "unlearn" their masturbatory habits and their often associated addiction to internet pornography. According to Dr. Porto, "The dysfunctions regressed and these patients were able to enjoy satisfactory sexual activity."

It appears that porn users who are not addicted are also at risk for developing porn-related sexual dysfunctions. Only one quarter of Porto's patients were assessed as addicts.

On August 5, 2016 *Behavioral Sciences* published a paper by US Navy psychiatrists and urologists warning that that internet pornography's unique properties (limitless novelty, potential for easy escalation to more extreme material, video format, etc.) may be potent enough to condition sexual arousal to aspects of internet porn use that do not readily transition to real-life partners, such that sex with desired partners may not register as meeting expectations and arousal drops.

15 years ago erectile dysfunction rates were negligible (2-5%) in sexually active men under 40. Now, researchers report rates as high as 30% in this same age group.

The doctors include clinical reports on three servicemen whose porn use appears to have contributed to sexual dysfunctions and problematic low desire during partnered sex. Two showed improvement after giving up internet porn use. A third was unable to quit.

As terminating internet porn use is sometimes sufficient to reverse negative effects, the doctors underscore the need for extensive research in which scientists ask subjects to remove the variable of internet pornography use in order to elucidate its effects.

The paper provides an extensive review of the relevant scientific literature, including recent neuroscience research. It proposes an etiology (cause of disease) for how internet porn use could create sexual difficulties even in otherwise healthy young men. For more on this paper see [Journal Club: This *Behavioral Sciences* Article Rings True For Us](#).

Concern about porn's potential role in sexual health is growing among urologists. In May, 2016, urologist Tarek Pacha delivered a presentation to his fellow doctors at the American Urological Association's annual conference in San Diego, CA, entitled "Pornography induced erectile dysfunction (PIED): Understanding the scope, science, and treatment." (see reference below).

The latest medical warnings about porn-related sexual dysfunctions arrive on the heels of a March, 2016 European study, which reported that problematic porn use is associated with lower erectile function, higher cravings for porn, and reduced overall sexual satisfaction. Half of those surveyed had escalated to internet porn material that was previously uninteresting.

There is a silver lining amid the barrage of new information. There's no evidence that old fashioned, internet porn-free masturbation is a risk factor for sexual dysfunctions.

The Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health (SASH) is a nonprofit multidisciplinary organization founded in 1987, dedicated to scholarship, clinical training, and resources for promoting sexual health and overcoming problematic sexual behaviors such as sex/porn addiction, hypersexual disorder, out of control sexual behavior, sexual impulsivity, and sexual abuse. Visit www.sash.net for more.

References:

- Porto, R. [Male Masturbation Habits and Sexual Dysfunctions](#) *Sexologies*; published 16 August 2016.

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