



EXERCISE AND SLEEP



EXERCISE--IS IT ADDICTIVE?

We've all heard about the health benefits of exercise. It increases the quality of life by reducing the chance of acquiring osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease. Exercise produces a good feeling usually attributed to endorphins, reduces stress, increases self-confidence, and burns calories. But it may be unhealthy for some people.

As our society becomes more obsessed with fitness, thinness, and body image in relation to a healthy lifestyle, exercise addiction may become more common. In fact you probably know someone who is an exercise nut. It is hard at first to tell the difference between a person who exercises and one who is addicted, but it becomes easy when an addict is deprived of their fix, exercise. Twelve to forty-eight hours of abstinence leaves a fitness fanatic anxious, irritable, frustrated, restless, depressed, and/or feeling guilty for not working out. As tolerance to exercise increases, greater amounts of time are spent working out. This may be at the expense of family obligations, romance, work,

school, or friends. The only way to relieve the symptoms, in these people's mind is exercise.

A longer break from exercise creates more intense problems. This may happen on a vacation, or if an injury forces a layoff of the exercise regimen. It should be noted, however, that an exercise addict is likely to take an active vacation like a bicycling trip or a ski tour. A problem with injuries happens when the addict exercises through the pain and ends up with a more serious injury. In addition to serious injuries, relationships, work and school performance may suffer when the addict isn't exercising.

As with all problematic behavior, there are ways to overcome exercise addiction. Acknowledging the behavior is the first step. Finding out why exercise is important to the addict may be helpful in replacing some exercise time with other activities. Talking with a friend or counselor is another method of helping yourself or a friend overcome addiction to exercise.

by Nysa Williams

ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH?

Sleep. It's certainly at times a scarce resource for all of us. It's so easy to sacrifice a few hours of precious sleep every night to finish that term paper or socialize with your friends. Experiencing a good night's sleep is as important in a person's over all physical and psychological "wellness", as is eating and exercising correctly.

The reasons why people need sleep is still not completely understood by scientists, yet for individuals who can't or don't get a good night's sleep are much more likely to be irritable, mentally and or physically tired and experience diminished work performance. In rare cases people who can't get a good night's sleep over an extended period of time, because of sleeping disorders, can experience overall disorientation, hypertension and even death in extremely rare cases.

What are some ways to combat those sleepless nights?

1. Exercise regularly—but not within two hours before you go to bed (sex is not categorized as exercise in this instance).
2. Take care of sounds and lights that bother you if you can. Get earplugs or find the courage to tell your neighbors to turn down the stereo, T.V., etc.
3. Eat before bedtime, if that helps. Milk, meat and lettuce contain an amino acid called tryptophan, which is a natural sleep inducer.
4. Avoid coffee, tea, soft drinks or chocolate—all of which contain

caffeine—for at least two hours before going to bed.

5. Avoid sleeping pills, alcohol and other drugs, except in small amounts because these types of "sleep inducers" have a tendency to put you to sleep fast but leave you tired the next day. Medications or other drug "sleep inducers" can prevent the deepest sleep, which is called REM (rapid eye movement) sleep from happening. It seems that in order for your body to feel really rested or experience "good quality sleep", you must go into REM, where and when dreaming occurs. When your body is denied REM sleep or the chance to dream, you feel tired and irritable the next morning. Also many sleeping pills or drugs lose their effectiveness over time and can even be addictive or dangerous to some people with certain sleeping disorders.

How much sleep do you need? Sleeping eight hours per night was once the standard prescription, but most people sleep an average of 6 to 8 hours each night. Some people need as little as 4 hours and others need as much as 12 hours. It depends on you.

Can you catch up on lost sleep? When you deprive your body of sleep, you can't really "catch up" on lost hours but the next time you sleep your sleep will most likely be deeper and of higher quality.

by Brian Wornath

CAMPUS FITNESS RESOURCES

• The Outdoor Program, Room 23 of the EMU, 346-436

—Offers excursions for University students and the community in: kayaking, day hikes, backpacking, canoeing, rafting, bike touring, wind surfing, caving, Telemark skiing, and winter camping.

—Offers a resource library of maps, trails, touring information, instructional sessions, video sessions, equipment swaps and a used equipment lending library.

• Recreation and Intramurals Office, 103 Gerlinger Hall, 346-4113

—Offers a wide variety of non-credit fitness classes such as aquatics, yoga, dance, clowning, aerobics, and team sports each term.

—Offers open recreation hours in gyms, pool and weight training room.

—Provides free information sheets on fitness activities.

—Provides maps for cycling and jogging around campus.

• Club Sports, Room 5 of the EMU, 346-3733

—Provides a co-ed, competitive, recreational program for students, faculty and staff that bridges the gap between intercollegiate programs and intramural programs.

—Activities include: Aikido, Badminton, Baseball, Bowling, Crew, Cycling, Equestrian, Fencing, Judo/jujitsu, Karate, Lacrosse, Ranger Challenge, Rifle, Rugby, Sailing, Skiing, Soccer, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tae Kwon Do, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Ice Hockey, Snowboarding and Waterpolo.

• Dept. of Physical Education and Human Movement Studies, 181 Esslinger Hall, 346-4105

—Offers a wide variety of fitness and sport skill classes like outdoor pursuits, martial arts, racket sports, team sports, and yoga each term which can be taken for credit or no credit.

—Offers hydrostatic weighing for measurement of body fat for a small fee (346-4135).



DID YOU KNOW...

* Thousands more people die from sitting on the couch too much than from sudden death while exercising. Regular exercise drastically reduces the risk of heart attack.

Studies have found that sedentary men are two to three times more likely to die prematurely of a heart attack than those who exercise regularly.

* Forty five minutes of brisk walking burns about 260 calories or about 27 pounds of

weight loss in one year. Walk, don't weight!

* After and during an intense workout spraying or splashing cool water on yourself may feel refreshing, but it doesn't rehydrate you or lower your body temperature significantly. Be sure not to let the cool spray distract you from drinking plenty of water—before, during and after your workout.