

Is Sex Addiction Real?

Sexual addiction is not recognized by the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). So what defines addiction? Powerlessness over a dependent behavior. A dependency that causes significant problems, and despite these problems, the afflicted person still can't stop using. Hall confesses her patients who deal with this struggle say it feels like an addiction. A growing body of research shows compulsive pornography use affects the brain similarly to chemical dependency.

Yes Sex addiction is real

Sex addiction is

- Any sexual activity that is used to modulate emotion and that feels out of control
- An unhealthy relationship with a mood-altering experience
- Someone with addiction is not reliably able to stop, or control, their behaviour in spite of significant harmful consequences



Help & Hope

Is recovery possible?

YES

8 Quick Facts on Sex Addiction

3 MIN READ

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8 Quick Facts on Sex Addiction

While some people are inappropriately labeled "sex addicts" - providing a blanket excuse for all kinds of irresponsible sexual behavior - others truly suffer from uncontrollable sexual impulses, or sex addiction.



Someone with sex addiction isn't just someone who loves sex. The main symptoms of sex addiction include a loss of control, failed attempts to stop unwanted sexual behavior, and a pattern of negative consequences from anxiety to depression and legal problems.

Here are some quick facts about sex addiction you may not know

- It is common among those with Bipolar Disorder to engage in high-risk sexual activities during manic states.
- People with Borderline Personality Disorder engage in unsafe sexual activities as a general pattern of self-injurious behavior.
- Often those with severe identity confusion regarding their own sexual orientation engage in compulsive sexual behavior.
- People with sexual disorders like exhibitionism, pedophilia and severe fetishes require much more than sex addiction treatment since their behavior victimizes others. Not all are sex addicts; some are antisocial personalities.
- Victims of childhood sexual abuse often repeat pattern of abuse in a subconscious attempt to gain control over their childhood trauma. People in this category generally suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder.
- Adolescents and young adults who are intellectually delayed can develop a pattern of compulsive sexual behavior, as a result of not having developed an accurate understanding of healthy sexuality. People with Asperger's Syndrome may be at greater risk of exhibiting out-of-control sexual behaviors.
- Substance abusers frequently develop sexually addictive behavior in one of two ways. Either the problem develops while they are abusing stimulants, or when they quit using drugs, sexual addiction develops as a sort of substitute addiction.
- Those with Dependent Personality Disorder, or love addiction, can become sexually addicted as well. Love addicts use sex to get love and can base their entire identity on the relationship, thus becoming totally dependent on that person.

What Can Be Done About Sex Addiction?

When a couple enters therapy, and one partner exhibits uncontrollable sexual impulses, the betrayed partner often feels victimized and asks me "fix it." Usually, both partners believe that responsibility lies solely with the partner who has acted out sexually. Unfortunately, for the relationship to survive one partner's sex addiction, they both have to work for it.

While the sexually addicted partner must assume responsibility for his behavior in order to regain the trust of his partner, the victimized partner must learn how to trust him again, which is never easy. However, with patience and commitment, it can be done.

Through psychotherapy and 12-Step work, partners of sex addicts often discover why their own personal psychology drew them to a partner with sexual addiction. Often women who were sexually abused as little girls gravitate towards sex addicts later in life. It may seem counter-intuitive, but an overly-sexualized child has confused sexual boundaries and may not even realize that the behaviors associated with sex addiction are unhealthy.

For sex addicts, the main focus of therapy is to help them identify effective ways to stop the unhealthy behavior patterns. Shame associated with sexual addiction can be a dangerous trigger for the disease. Twelve-step programs like 'sex addicts anonymous' and group therapy are the most effective ways to reduce shame and heal from sex addiction.

It can also be helpful to understanding the psychology behind sexual behavior, something I call "cracking the erotic code." Everyone has a sexual narrative. Uncovering the non-sexual meanings of our fantasies and behaviors can help us identify our needs - allowing sex addicts to find alternative sources of satisfaction and allowing their partners to feel compassion, empathy and understanding instead of frustration, sadness and anger.

Source : <https://psychcentral.com/blog/8-quick-facts-on-sex-addiction/>
written by Dr. Joe Kort.