

## What Symptoms Should I Expect

When suffering from any addiction, many people begin their recovery by stopping the addictive behavior immediately. Though this is probably one of the more effective ways to distance yourself from the addiction, it can take a toll on you mentally and physically. It is filled with symptoms that are, to put it simply, your mind and body's way of coping with the sudden loss of numbing behavior.

When it comes to sex addiction, it could become normal to isolate from your family to make time to watch porn, to keep secrets about compulsive sexual behavior, and engage in other sexual behavior that is out of control. This can lead to sexual dysfunction (especially for men), broken relationships, excessive expenditures, loss of career opportunities and risk to current employment.

Knowing how dangerous sex addiction actually is should encourage you to stick with recovery despite how difficult these symptoms become.

### Withdrawal

"The pain of withdrawal is unique, special, even precious (although you probably don't now think so). In a sense, the experience is you, a part of you which has been trying to surface for a long time. You have been avoiding or postponing this pain for a long time now, yet you have never been able to lastingly outrun it. You need to go through withdrawal in order to become a whole person. You need to meet yourself. Behind the terror of what you fear, withdrawal contains the seeds for your own personal wholeness. It must be experienced for you to realize, or make real, that potential for you and your life which has been stored there for so long."

Excerpted from Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous

*Do you feel worse now that you've stopped looking at porn?*

*Knowing what to expect when you're going through porn addiction withdrawal is crucial to fighting temptation. When you understand what your body is going to throw at you, it's a lot easier to say, "This is normal and I just have to get through it."*

*If you know anyone who's ever tried to quit smoking, these withdrawal symptoms will look pretty familiar. Studies have shown that withdrawal from porn and masturbation is just as severe as withdrawal from heroin or cocaine.*

*As you continue reading, you'll get a day-by-day walk-through of the most common stages of porn addiction withdrawal.*

*If you struggle with sex addiction and are looking for help, you have taken the first step to a better life. Seeking recovery from your addiction will help you reclaim your life as your own, which makes the choice to change such a brave and powerful one.*

*However, the road will not be easy, and it is important to know what you're in for as you begin your recovery journey from sex addiction. When in the midst of recovery from any addiction, there will be symptoms to expect and they can range in severity. However, knowing what to expect can help you learn to handle whatever your recovery road has to throw at you.*

## Tri County Recovery

### Sex Addiction Withdrawal

The Four Month Withdrawal Cycle

v5.0.0.3



## SAA

From Shame to Grace  
Path to Healing and Recovery  
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## Sex Addiction Withdrawal Symptoms

The mental and emotional components of sex addiction withdrawal can be intense, in particular in the beginning, and like substance use, cause cravings. Withdrawal is different for everyone, but in general, a person can experience bouts of depression or anxiety, mental and physical exhaustion, mood swings, irrational thoughts, unexplainable physical pain, irritability, sleepiness or sleeplessness.

The following represent porn withdrawal symptoms experienced by a person over a period of time, with onset starting within 48 hours of quitting.

### 17 Sex Addiction Withdrawal Symptoms to Expect

Insomnia	Relapse	Body aches
Irritability	Mood Swings	Chills
Shame	Agitation	Genital Sensitivity
Headaches	Dysphoria	Night sweats
Depression	Lack of appetite	
Loss of Interest	Anxiety	

### 1 to 7 Days Without Porn

The first thing that happens when you quit is that your Dopamine levels take a nose-dive. Dopamine is the chemical your brain surges into your system every time you look at porn/act out.

In these first few days, your brain is literally in shock.

Many people experience these withdrawal symptoms within 48 hours of quitting:

**Grumpiness** – Every little thing will irritate you. Some become extremely cynical about everything around them.

**Mood swings** – As your brain tries to rebalance itself, you'll feel like a teenage girl having her first period... Happy one minute and on the verge of tears the next. Seriously.

**Headaches** – Some people report intense migraines while others might get subtle pressure headaches that lasted for hours at a time.

**Anxiety** – Some people have legitimate panic attacks, but while others this more as a general feeling of stress. From the first three days for the next three months, some have reported they always felt like they had way too much to do.

**Pornographic Thoughts** – Temptation during the first week is extremely intense. This is because your last pornographic experience is still fresh on your mind. We'll talk more about this later.

### The Seven-Day Craving

Can you quit looking at porn for an entire week?

For most people reading this, the answer is no. The classic test of addiction is whether or not you can make it a full seven days without even looking at porn. That's because of the Seven-Day Craving, a classic pitfall for first-time quitters.

The Seven-Day Craving is exactly what it sounds like... You'll usually experience very intense cravings around Day 7 without looking at porn. For some people, you'll get your 7-Day Craving at Day 21. For others, it'll come at Day 5 and last 'til Day 10.

### 1 to 3 Weeks Without Porn

**Congratulations!** You made it past the first week. You've still got a long road ahead of you, but you should still pat yourself on the back for making it this far.

These are the most common symptoms people report after the initial one-week hump:

**Zombie-like State** – Because your brain has been deprived of its regular Dopamine highs, it's common for abstainers to enter a sluggish, zombie-like state. Expect low energy levels to last anywhere from two weeks to two months.

**Unable to Focus** – Many find they are not able to work efficiently in the first few weeks after they quit. The constant fatigue somehow can make them feel restless, and things that normally took 30 minutes now take an hour. This can be accompanied by had no motivation and no focus.

**Social Awkwardness** – It's hard to accurately describe this symptom, but many people echoed that they felt awkward or exposed in social settings. It feels like you constantly have your foot in your mouth.

**Low Sex Drive** – You might expect your sex drive to be bursting at the seams after going without porn for a week or two, but many people report the exact opposite. Although porn will still ignite temptation when you think about it, any other sexual activity may not sound appealing while your brain reboots.

**Loneliness** – Single people especially will have trouble with this one. You'll experience loneliness, and you'll want to escape it with porn. Don't give in!

### 4 to 8 Weeks Without Porn

28 days without any porn or masturbation is when about 50% of the people start feeling the initial porn addiction withdrawals start to go away.

For the rest of you, keep going, your relief is just a few weeks away!

Heavily addicted people will probably need another month or two. Even if you still struggle with withdrawal symptoms, by now you've at least gotten used to going through each day without porn. Looking at it is no longer a habit.

### Here's what's happening in your brain right now:

The "layers" of addicting Delta Fos-B which built up in your brain due to repeated Dopamine overdosing are starting to disintegrate. Your brain is it essentially re-wiring itself to function with normal levels of Dopamine.

Here are some specific withdrawals to look out for from days 30 to 60

**Random Temptation** – There have been so many times that addicts have made it to four or five weeks without looking at porn, only to have a single bad day that send the sufferer hurtling back into relapse.

**Bursts of Overwhelming Emotion** – You may be reading a book, looking out the window or lying in bed when suddenly you feel yourself tearing up about nothing in particular.

**Insomnia** – People who were heavily addicted to porn for a long time are the most likely to experience insomnia in this stage of recovery. Insomnia due to withdrawal is nearly impossible to treat, and over-the-counter sleep aids probably won't do much to help.

**Depression** – Again, not all people will suffer from depression, and some may experience it much earlier in the withdrawal process. It's not uncommon for this depression to last several weeks, but it always goes away eventually.

### 2 Months & Beyond

If you've made it two solid months without looking at porn at all, then you're starting to notice some definite improvements in your life.

- \* You're starting to feel happier
- \* Your sex drive is coming back in a healthy way
- \* You have more energy and focus than ever before
- \* Your marriage and relations actually feels fulfilling and your partner looks gorgeous/handsom

If a person doesn't relapse, Porn addiction withdrawal symptoms will rarely last more than 6 months. If a person remains abstinent and doesn't relapse the withdrawal symptoms will last between two and four months at which point the turning point will be achieved.

If a relapse occurs, perseverance and starting again is the key.

**There's one thing that you absolutely must remember at all times...**

**Never - Ever - Let Your Guard Down**

Temptation could come at any turn, and years down the road you may still face a spark of temptation every now and then. But if you can keep yourself away from porn without any relapse for a full two months, without doubt, you'll start noticing some changes.