

Excessive gaming leads to health issues, says study

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University of Queensland research has found gaming for more than three hours a day can lead to health problems.

Dr. Daniel Stjepanović from UQ's National Center for Youth Substance Use Research (NCYSUR) said the study examined responses from 955 gamers aged 18 to 94 from Australia, Canada, U.S. and the U.K., collected during NCYSUR's 2022 International Gaming Study.

[The research](#) is published in *Computers in Human Behavior*.

"We looked at the relationship between prolonged continuous game play and physical problems participants identified in the past 12 months," Dr. Daniel Stjepanović said.

"Results showed regardless of age or gender, people who played video games continuously for three or more hours were more likely to get eye fatigue and wrist, hand, back, and neck pain, compared to those who played under three hours.

"Interestingly, we found the negative physical effects of gaming for more than three hours per session were similar to those who reported gaming for more than six hours.

"Physical problems associated with excessive gaming were also reported by participants who aspired to be professional gamers.

"These results show there is a need for public health interventions that promote safer gaming habits."

The research team found older age groups were more likely to report hand or wrist pain, and those at higher risk of gaming disorder reported other physical symptoms such as headaches and fatigue.

Adverse impacts of gaming are recognized by the World Health Organization and gaming disorder has been included in the latest revision of the International Classification of Diseases.

Associate Professor Gary Chung Kai Chan said improved education and prevention was needed to ensure people understood the potential risks of gaming for prolonged periods.

"Many studies have looked at [psychological factors](#) associated with excessive video game use, but few have examined the physical impacts," Dr. Chan said.

"Video games provide positive experiences and joy for many people, however it's important gaming is enjoyed in moderation.

"Gamers should be aware of the amount of time they are spending on the activity and consider ways in which they can practice healthy habits to reduce the impact on their physical health.

"Getting away from the keyboard for periods of time and considering the ergonomics of a gaming set up can help to protect the health and well-being of [gamers](#)."

More information: Janni Leung et al, Extended hours of video game play and negative physical symptoms and pain, *Computers in Human Behavior* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2024.108181](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2024.108181)

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