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LIFESTYLE

Get offline

Internet addiction may weaken your immune system

SPENDING TOO MUCH time online can damage your immune function, warns a new study. People with greater levels of Internet addiction problems are 30 percent more likely to catch colds and flu than those who are less addicted to the internet, the findings showed.

“Those who spend a long time alone on the Internet experience reduced immune function as a result of simply not having enough contact with others and their germs,” explained one of the researchers Phil Reed, professor at Swansea University in Wales, Britain.

“We found that the impact of the Internet on people’s health was independent of a range of other factors, like depression, sleep deprivation, and loneliness, which are associated with high levels of Internet use and also with poor health,” Reed noted in a statement released by Swansea University.

The study also suggested that those who are addicted to the Internet may suffer from great stress when they are disconnected from the net, and this cycle of stress and relief associated with internet addic-



tion may lead to altered levels of cortisol - a hormone that impacts immune function.

Researchers evaluated 500 people aged 18 to 101 years old.

Those who reported problems with over-using the Internet also reported having more cold and flu symptoms than those people who did not report excessive use of the Internet.

Previous research has shown that people who spend more time on the Internet experience greater sleep deprivation, have worse eating habits and less healthy diets, engage in less exercise, and also tend to smoke and drink more.

These behaviours too can harm their immune system and increase vulnerability to

diseases.

“It does not seem to matter what you use it for, if you use it too much, you are more susceptible to illness. However, the mechanisms responsible for you getting ill may differ, depending on how you use the net,” professor Roberto Truzoli from Milan University in Italy who was part of the new study noted. *IANS*

Get fit

Exercise helps reduce daytime sleepiness

IF YOU FIND it too hard to stay awake at work despite a good night’s sleep, daily aerobic exercise can help you focus, say researchers, including one of Indian-origin.

Exercise reduces the levels of two proteins, resulting in reduced excessive sleepiness, the findings showed. The study involved people with hypersomnia, which is characterised by sleeping too much at night as well as excessive daytime sleepiness.

“Identifying these biomarkers, combined with new understanding of the important role of exercise in reducing hypersomnia, have potential implications in the treatment of major depressive disorder,” said study senior author Madhukar Trivedi from University of Texas Southwestern

Medical Center in the US.

People with hypersomnia are compelled to nap repeatedly during the day, often at inappropriate times such as at work, during a meal, or in conversation.

They often have difficulty waking from a long sleep, and may feel disoriented upon waking, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), part of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Other symptoms may include anxiety, increased irritation, decreased energy, restlessness, slow thinking, slow speech, loss of appetite, hallucinations, and memory difficulty.

The researchers looked at blood samples provided by study partici-



pants who were randomly assigned to two types of aerobic exercise to determine the effects of exercise on their depression.

More than 100 adults ages 18 to 70 who had major depression disorder participated. Researchers found that reductions in two biomarkers - brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) and Interleukin-1 beta - are related to reductions in hypersomnia.

The findings appeared in the journal *Translational Psychiatry*. *IANS*

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Things To Display

Very often I get asked about what kind of decorative items are acceptable as per Feng Shui. There are no specific rules as per Flying Star School of Feng Shui with regards to types of art and decorative items one can display. However, there are some basic guidelines that everyone can follow.

To begin with, any kind of religious items can be displayed easily in the mountain area of the house as per Flying Star School of Feng Shui. This area is derived after detailed calculations based on the compass reading and the year of the construction of the house. There is limited energy movement in this area and as a result, it is an ideal place for worship without any distractions.

It is recommended to display family photographs, and memorabilia around the house. More than Feng Shui, it has a positive effect on your mind and creates a happy family atmosphere. Displaying pictures of your children, parents or friends also creates a good feeling. Some parents proudly display drawings done by their kids. There is nothing wrong with this and gives encouragement to children.

In some houses artwork is given a lot of importance. As per Flying Star School of Feng Shui it is recommended to display colours such as red or orange. However these need to be hung in the water area of the house. This area is derived after detailed calculations based on the compass reading and the year of the construction of the house. The energy in this area is active and using bright colours helps in boosting the energy flow.

Metal statues and wind chimes are an integral part of Feng Shui décor. They are however used to bring down earth energy within your home, which helps in improving health. After detailed calculations the areas within a home where these can be displayed/hung can be identified. Last but not the least, using happy and colourful artwork enhances the feeling of happiness within a home. It is scientifically proven that bright colours tend to put you in a happy mood. Therefore stay clear of dark colours such as black. Open up the energy in your home with beautiful happy memories, brightly coloured paintings and meaningful sculptures. Creating a happy home is part Feng Shui and part displaying things that make you happy!

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