

Addiction Recovery Center [ARC]  
3880 South Bascom Avenue, Suite 206  
San Jose, CA 95124  
408/907-3176  
[www.addictionrecoverycenter.org](http://www.addictionrecoverycenter.org)

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## **SEXUAL ADDICTION: WHAT IS IT?**

Sex addiction is obsessive/compulsive sexual behavior, with self or other, which if left untreated will cause severe distress and despair for both the addict and his or her family. The sex addict is unable to control his or her sexual behavior and lives with constant pain, alienation, isolation, shame, and fear of discovery.

The sex addict is trapped in bondage of compulsive sexual behavior over which he or she cannot control, change, or stop.

### **Another definition of Addiction**

The use of a substance or activity for the purpose of lessening pain or augmenting pleasure, by a person who has lost control over the rate, frequency, or duration of its use, and whose life has become progressively unmanageable as a result.

### **WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

Frequent engagement in behavior(s) to a greater extent or over longer periods than intended; a pattern of out-of-control behavior

Persistent desire for the behavior(s) or one or more unsuccessful efforts to reduce or control the behavior(s)

Much time is spent either in getting ready to engage, engaging, or recovering from the effects of the behavior(s)

Frequent engaging in behavior(s) when expected to be engaged in occupational, academic, domestic, or social activities

Giving up or limiting important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of engaging in sexual behavior(s)

Continuation of the behavior(s) despite knowledge of having a persistent, recurrent, adverse social, financial, psychological, or physical problem that is caused by or exacerbated by the behavior(s)

Need to increase the intensity or frequency of the behavior(s) to achieve the desired effect, or diminished effect with continued behavior(s) of the same intensity

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### STATISTICALLY SPEAKING:

All American males 13 years old and older:

1 in 10 view porn daily; 1 in 5 Americans use porn weekly.

1/3 say they come across porn weekly without looking for it.

All American women 13 years old and older:

1% use porn daily; 7% use porn weekly.

Married adults 25 years old and older:

3% seek out porn daily; 9% weekly.

Single adults 25 years old and older:

7% view porn daily; 15% view porn weekly.

Practicing Christians 13 years old and older:

7% of practicing Christians view porn weekly or more often.

Teens and young adults:

55% rank not recycling as more immoral than viewing porn.

32% report viewing pornographic images.

40% have sent nude images of themselves to others.

49% say all or most of their friends use porn regularly.

Trying to stop?

9% of all porn users tried to stop, but were unable to stop, or started again.

16% of practicing Christians, unable to stop, or started again.

Is there anyone in your life who is helping you to stop?

79% of teens and young adults say, "No".

87% of adults 25 years old and older say, "No".

Researched statistics cited from *The Porn Phenomenon. The impact of pornography in the digital age*; Research conducted and reported by the Barna Group, Ventura, California.

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Restlessness or irritability if unable to engage in the behavior(s)  
A neurochemical problem – takes place in the brain (compulsivity; not in control)  
Possible presence of other addictions Serotonin/Dopamine released resemble Opiates=  
numb pain and produces feeling of well being- hits all reward pathways in the brain; have  
to increase (progressively) in order to get that same experience of well being.  
High incidence of depression  
Secrecy, due to shame  
Loneliness and anger

#### **SIMPLE DIAGNOSTIC TOOL**

Preoccupied: Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts?  
Ashamed: Do you hide some of your sexual behavior from others?  
Treatment: Have you ever sought therapy for sexual behavior you did not like?  
Hurt others: Has anyone been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behavior?  
Out of control: Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire?  
Sad: when you have sex, do you feel depressed afterwards?

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, call us-we can help.

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### **Websites & Books:**

*Your Sexually Addicted Spouse*; by Barbara Steffens & Marsha Means  
*Out of the Shadows*; by Patrick Carnes, Ph.D.  
*Don't Call it Love*; by Patrick Carnes, Ph.D.  
*Breathing Under Water; Spirituality and the 12 Steps*; by Richard Rohr  
Good Pictures Bad Pictures; by K. Jensen & G. Poyner  
[www.protectyoungminds.org](http://www.protectyoungminds.org)  
[www.rtribe.org](http://www.rtribe.org)  
[www.fightthenewdrug.org](http://www.fightthenewdrug.org)

### **Web sites for 12 Step meetings:**

SAA: Sex Addicts Anonymous. [www.bayareasaa.org](http://www.bayareasaa.org)  
SA: Sexaholics Anonymous. [www.sabayarea.org](http://www.sabayarea.org)  
S-Anon: for partners. [www.bayareasanon.org](http://www.bayareasanon.org)  
CoSA: for partners. [www.cosa-recovery.org](http://www.cosa-recovery.org)  
Celebrate Recovery [www.celebraterecovery.com](http://www.celebraterecovery.com)

### **Internet accountability and filtering software:**

X3watch Pro

Covenant Eyes

Safe Eyes

All include software for computers as well as mobile devices