

Internet addiction more serious than OCD

Internet addiction should be grouped with extreme addictive disorders such as gambling, sex addiction and kleptomania, an Israeli psychiatrist said.

Dr. Pinhas Dannon of Tel Aviv University's Sackler Faculty of Medicine said 10 percent of Internet surfers are afflicted with "Internet addiction disorder," which can lead to anxiety and severe depression.

Internet addiction is classified by mental health professionals as an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, a mild to severe mental health condition that results in an urge to engage in ritualistic thoughts and behavior.

"Internet addiction is not manifesting itself as an 'urge.' It's more than that. It's a deep 'craving.' And if we don't make the change in the way we classify Internet addiction, we won't be able to treat it in the proper way," Dannon said Friday in a release.

He said the two groups at greatest risk from Internet addiction disorder are teenagers and people in their mid-50s suffering from the loneliness of an empty nest.

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