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WHO warns of 'gaming disorder'

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Digital gamers or video gamers were warned by the World Health Organization (WHO) against developing 'gaming disorder', which is set to be officially declared as a disease.

In its "Online Q&A", the WHO said people who engage in gaming must be concerned about developing gaming disorder.

"People who partake in gaming should be alert to the amount of time they spend on gaming activities," the WHO said.

Gaming disorder is defined as a pattern of gaming behavior (digital-gaming or video-gaming) characterized by impaired control over gaming, such as increasing priority given to gaming over other activities to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other interests and daily activities.

In addition, continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of nega-

tive consequences may also be considered as a sign of gaming disorder.

The WHO stressed that 'gamers' should be concerned if they have behaviors that lead to the exclusion of other daily activities.

Gamers should also be vigilant over any changes in their physical or psychological health and social functioning, it noted.

"For gaming disorder to be diagnosed, the behavior pattern must be of sufficient severity to result in significant impairment in personal, family, social, educational, occupational, or other important areas of functioning and would normally have been evident for at least 12 months," the WHO explained.

Gaming disorder is set to be included in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), which is used by medical practitioners around the world to diagnose conditions and by researchers to categorize conditions, the health organization disclosed.

* WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

* GAMING DISORDER