**Are Video Games Good for the Mind?**

Reviewed by Steven Downshen, MD

April 2012

*Are video games — like strategy and role-playing games, for example — good for the mind?*

Studies show that certain types of video games may improve hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, and the mind's ability to process information.

Sometimes, though, video games cause more health troubles than benefits. People who spend too much time sitting while playing video games don't get enough exercise. Lack of exercise can play a role in many health problems, including becoming overweight or obese.

Experts also worry that too much video gaming can interfere with a person's life, hurting things like school performance and friendships. Some psychiatrists are concerned that certain people might even become addicted to playing video games. And it's still unclear what impact games with violent or inappropriate sexual content might have on the brain.

Although the jury's still out on the subject, for now it makes sense to enjoy the right kinds of games in moderation. Try mixing up your games: Stimulate your brain with strategy games sometimes; other times, get up and get into games that allow you to physically interact with the action on the screen.

Follow these tips, limit your game playing time to 1 or 2 hours a day, and video game play can be part of a balanced, well-rounded life.