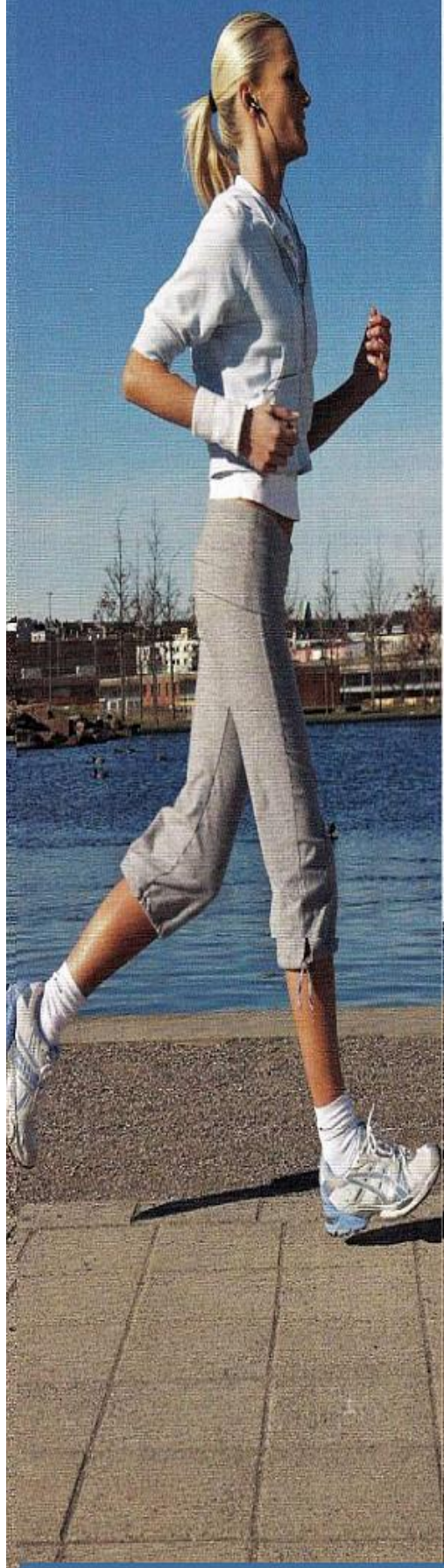


KICKING THE HABIT



The term 'exercise addiction' was coined in 1976 by Dr William Glasser when he was studying long-distance runners. He noticed that many of them experienced low moods when they couldn't train, and he came to differentiate between positive and negative addictions: a positive addiction involves a love of the activity, and the exercise is scheduled around other everyday activities. You run your running schedule, for example, rather than it running you, and an enforced day off isn't the end of the world. The results are increased feelings of physical and psychological wellbeing. **1** Relationships and work suffer, a day away from the gym causes distress, and health can decline as overtraining leads to injury and illness.

Two types of negative exercise addiction have since been defined. Secondary addiction is probably the most common, where the compulsion to exercise is driven by a need to control and change one's body shape, and is often accompanied by an eating disorder. **2** 'Whatever workout my client was doing, I'd do it, too, alongside them, supposedly to motivate them, but in fact it was to keep my weight down. In total, I was doing several hours of cardio every day, and I didn't actually enjoy the exercise. I hated the feeling of not having the perfect body even more, though.'

With Primary addiction, body image isn't so central. **3** It works like this: when we exercise strenuously, we activate our sympathetic nervous system, causing a rise in the concentration of serotonin and other chemicals in the brain which make us feel happy.

At the same time, the body produces endorphins which shut down pain signals reaching the brain. **4** Add all these together, and you have a recipe for mild euphoria. Unfortunately, just as the body's tolerance of drugs increases, so it is with endorphins: more are required to produce the same thrill, so the exercise intensity has to be increased. **5**

Tony, who took drugs daily for almost a decade, then took to running half-marathons. He admits that getting the kick got harder. He said he'd lie awake at night thinking about the next day's session. It still wasn't as good as the drugs he was on before. Sports and exercise psychologist Paul Russell has encountered many people like Tony. 'Exercise addiction tends to be a more temporary addiction, marking time before the person returns to the basic ones, like drugs. **6** If they haven't sorted out the reasons for this state, via counselling for example, they'll have to direct that need to something else.'

You are going to read an article about dealing with addiction. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A–G the one which fits each gap (1–6). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

- A Half an hour of intense aerobic exercise can produce five times the amount you'd have if you were sitting down.
- B Low concentrations of these are closely linked to depression.
- C It may be, though, that the thrill can never quite compare with that achieved by taking drugs.
- D People become addicted to something because there's an underlying unhappiness.
- E Steve, a personal trainer, used his work to mask his secondary addiction.
- F The thrill from the exercise is the thing, the drug-like feelings brought about by the activity are what addicts want.
- G With a negative addiction, on the other hand, exercise overrides everything.