

-MEN- BODY IMAGE & COMPULSIVE EXERCISING



HOW DOES OUR BODY-OBSSESSED CULTURE AFFECT MEN?

- 20% of all plastic surgeries in 2003 were performed on men
- As early as elementary school, many boys are dissatisfied with their bodies
- Body dissatisfaction may result in low self-esteem or depression
- Some boys/men take anabolic steroids to increase their muscles
- Some develop eating disorders or other conditions involving body image such as body dysmorphic disorder
- Some men exercise compulsively
- Many men are just as unhappy, or almost as unhappy, with their appearance as women
- 39% of normal weight college undergraduate men in one survey said they did things to increase their body weight or size “all the time” or “frequently”
- American men spent over \$2 billion on commercial gym memberships in 1999
- American men spent another \$2 billion-plus on home exercise equipment (weight machines, treadmills etc)
- The market for men’s fitness magazines has exploded
- The paid circulation of Men’s Health climbed more than sixfold in 7 years
- Many men’s health magazines focus on male body appearance

WHAT DO PEOPLE REALLY THINK?

- The body that men THINK people like is typically about 15-20 pounds more muscular than what people actually like
- Massive muscles don’t improve sex appeal or make a man more masculine
- Muscles don’t make the man

WHAT IS BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER (BDD)?

- BDD refers to all types or serious unfounded body image concerns or imagined ugliness

Taken from The Adonis Complex:

How to Identify, Treat, and Prevent Body Obsession in Men and Boys.

Approved 04/06

WHAT IS MUSCLE DYSMORPHIA (MD)?

- MD is the form of BDD in which muscularity is the focus
- It can range from a minor annoyance to a devastating psychiatric condition
- Men with MD may exercise compulsively or take steroids

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COMPULSIVE EXERCISING?

- Exercise despite injury
- Think and talk a lot about sport and exercise
- Exercise is a chore or obligation
- Others express concern about their time spent exercising
- Self-worth measured or based on athletic performance
- Damaged or ruined relationships because of exercising
- Lower grades in school due to exercising
- Stress fractures
- Depression or guilt when exercise is not possible

GETTING HELP

Getting help is very difficult for men. However, when changing your appearance begins to cause emotional distress, undermines social relationships, or impairs school or work performance, it is time to get help. Many men experience body image issues. You are not alone.

A NEW VISION FOR MEN

- Don’t buy into the media images around you
- Remember that many of the super muscular male bodies you’re seeing are just products of drugs
- Remember that a vast industry profits from making you feel insecure about your body
- Masculinity isn’t defined by the way you look

HEALTH SERVICES HAS THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Nutrition/eating concerns counseling

Free, included with Health Fee

Call (603) 862-3823 to make an appointment

Stress management and men’s issues counseling

Free, included with Health Fee

Call (603) 862-3823 to make an appointment

www.unh.edu/health-services