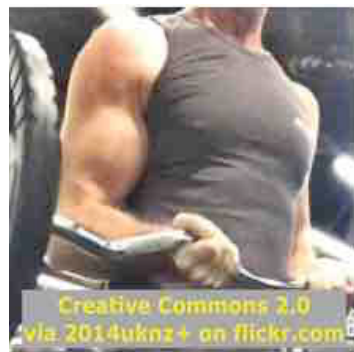


Teens increasingly worried about muscle size

24th February 2025



A study from the University of Toronto suggests growing numbers of young people are becoming obsessed with the size of their muscles. This obsession is a mental health condition called muscle dysmorphia, also known as "bigorexia". Kara

Becker, a certified eating disorder therapist, spoke to the HuffPost website about the affliction. She said: "Bigorexia is a psychological condition...which involves a distorted self-image that focuses specifically on muscle size and physical appearance." Sufferers can experience extreme distress over their perceived lack of muscularity. Bigorexia can afflict even those who work out regularly and have the physique of a bodybuilder.

Researchers said muscle dysmorphia was rising in teenagers and people in their twenties. The study stated that up to a quarter of men and 10 per cent of women in their research could suffer from bigorexia. Ms Becker said a variety of factors can cause young people to worry about their body shape. She said: "People with low self-esteem, perfectionism, or obsessive-compulsive tendencies are more vulnerable to developing this disorder." Social media may be a factor in exacerbating the problem. Youngsters can be overwhelmed with images of people with the "perfect" body. Another cause may be the aggressive marketing of muscle-building supplements and anabolic steroids.

Sources: cnn.com / huffpost.com / consumeraffairs.com

Writing

No one needs big muscles. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

young people / muscles / mental health / disorder / self-image / distress / physique / body shape / self-esteem / perfectionism / obsessive / the perfect body / steroids

True / False

- 1) Many students at the University of Toronto are worried about muscles. T / F
- 2) Being obsessed with muscle size is called "bigorexia". T / F
- 3) A therapist said bigorexia was a physical condition. T / F
- 4) Bodybuilders never have bigorexia. T / F
- 5) Bigorexia is rising faster in teens than in people in their twenties. T / F
- 6) More women than men suffer from muscle dysmorphia. T / F
- 7) People with low self-esteem are more likely to suffer from bigorexia. T / F
- 8) Young people can see too many online images of "perfect" bodies. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. obsessed | a. twisted |
| 2. condition | b. regard |
| 3. therapist | c. illness |
| 4. distorted | d. adjudged |
| 5. perceived | e. forceful |
| 6. variety | f. preoccupied |
| 7. esteem | g. assortment |
| 8. tendencies | h. swamped |
| 9. overwhelmed | i. counsellor |
| 10. aggressive | j. inclinations |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of muscles?
- b) What do you know about muscles?
- c) How happy are you with your body shape?
- d) Would you like bigger muscles?
- e) Why are some people obsessed about muscles?
- f) What advice do you have for people with bigorexia?
- g) What do you know about eating disorders?
- h) What do you think of bodybuilders?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. obsessed with the | a. tendencies |
| 2. a certified eating disorder | b. of muscularity |
| 3. Bigorexia is a psychological | c. of a bodybuilder |
| 4. distress over their perceived lack | d. with images |
| 5. have the physique | e. steroids |
| 6. People with low self- | f. therapist |
| 7. obsessive-compulsive | g. marketing |
| 8. overwhelmed | h. esteem |
| 9. aggressive | i. size of their muscles |
| 10. anabolic | j. condition |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why do you think muscle dysmorphia is rising?
- How important is perfectionism to you?
- Do you have any obsessive-compulsive tendencies?
- How is social media affecting people's opinions of body shape?
- What do you think of the 'perfect' body?
- What do you think of aggressive marketing?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- young people are becoming boosedses
- a citfreeid eating disorder therapist
- spoke to the HuffPost website about the ifilcotanf
- a stidoertd self-image
- their ceeevdrpi lack of muscularity
- the ihqsypue of a bodybuilder
- obsessive-compulsive tcnedenesi
- more beulrevlan to developing this disorder
- a factor in ctnxgeaiaerb the problem
- eevwrdhlome with images of people
- marketing of muscle-building semulepptsn
- anabolic ditseors

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. c	3. i	4. a	5. d
6. g	7. b	8. j	9. h	10. e

Role Play

Role A – The Perfect Body

You think the perfect body is the most difficult thing to be get. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things are easier to get. Also, tell the others which is the easiest of these (and why): the perfect job, the perfect lifestyle or perfect health.

Role B – The Perfect Job

You think the perfect job is the most difficult thing to be get. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things are easier to get. Also, tell the others which is the easiest of these (and why): the perfect body, the perfect lifestyle or perfect health.

Role C – The Perfect Lifestyle

You think the perfect lifestyle is the most difficult thing to be get. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things are easier to get. Also, tell the others which is the easiest of these (and why): the perfect job, the perfect body or perfect health.

Role D – Perfect Health

You think perfect health is the most difficult thing to be get. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things are easier to get. Also, tell the others which is the easiest of these (and why): the perfect job, the perfect lifestyle or the perfect body.

Speaking – Perfection

Rank these with your partner. Put the hardest thing to be perfect at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| • The perfect body | • The perfect home |
| • The perfect job | • The perfect vacation |
| • The perfect partner | • The perfect family |
| • The perfect lifestyle | • Perfect health |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	F	4	F	5	F	6	F	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.