

Information technology can pose a number of physical, mental, and cognitive health risks. Potential negative impacts include increased exposure to negative online social interactions (cyberbullying, feelings of missing out, and social comparisons); reduced physical activity; sleep disruption; isolation from in-person contact; and the possibility of Internet/social media addiction. In addition, increased reliance on various forms of artificial intelligence (see Chapter 11) may be impacting our power to make decisions based on our own judgments (Moser, den Hond, and Lindebaum, 2022; Carr, 2015). Computer vision syndrome (CVS) refers to any eyestrain condition related to display screen use with desktop computers, laptops, e-readers, smartphones, and handheld video game players. Designing workstations for a neutral wrist position (for example, using a wrist rest to support the wrist), proper monitor stands, and footrests all contribute to proper posture and reduced RSI. RSI occurs when muscle groups are forced through repetitive actions that are often made with high-impact loads (such as playing tennis) or tens of thousands of repetitions under low-impact loads (such as working at a computer keyboard). The most common kind of computer-related RSI is carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), in which pressure on the median nerve through the wrist's bony structure, called a carpal tunnel, produces pain. In the United States and most other developed countries, CTS affects an estimated 1 to 3 percent of the general population in any given year (Sevy and Varacallo, 2022). Symptoms of CTS include numbness, shooting pain, inability to grasp objects, and tingling. The topic remains controversial, however, with one recent study of 430,000 UK and US adolescents finding little evidence for an increased association between adolescents' technology engagement and mental health problems over the past 30 years (APS, 2021). The growth of the Internet and the information economy suggests that all the ethical and social issues we have described will be heightened as we move further into the first fully digital century. The incidence of RSI is estimated to affect as much as one-third of the labor force and accounts for one-third of all disability cases.