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Technology and Us

"Don't sit too close to the television; Your brain will rot and your eyes will fall out." I'm sure most of you have heard this at least once from your parents at some point in time. We would get scolded by our parents for sitting too close to the tv and now with cell phones, our eyes are glued to those screens a huge part of every day. As technology advances every day, people are becoming more dependent on it. Many people depend on technology for the weather, news, directions, answers to curiosity and a myriad of other things. This reliability on technology warrants an examination of whether or not technology has an effect on our health.

Bekah Witten attacked this dilemma in three different ways in her article, "Technology's Effect on Our Health: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." She started with technology playing a role in our laziness. Witten asserts that laziness shouldn't be technology's fault because what we do with technology is solely up to us. "We make the decision every day whether or not we should research something new, take a walk, or watch Orange is the New Black." (Witten)

People should start to take responsibility for their actions and not blame it on technology. Lauren Lanna for example, explains in her article "Technology Does Not Make Our Generation Lazy" that having information at her finger tips gives her more time to spend on learning new things and that she still works hard at school and her job despite the times she goes on her phone during her breaks. She didn't utilize technology as a tool of avoidance of the world around her,

exemplifying that the effects of technology on laziness depends on how you go about using the it in your daily life.

Witten's second attack on this question is in terms of the impact screens have on our eyes. Our eyes were never developed to read small letters on small bright screens. This discomfort on top of head, neck, and shoulder aches due to posture, are all due to our screen time

According to The Vision Council's study on Digital Eye strain shows that screens do have an impact on our eyes. In the study, 32.4 percent of American adults have reported experiencing eye strain, while 27.2 percent reported dry eyes after two or more hours of screen time. Staring at a screen for too long can have other side effects such as headaches, blurred vision, and neck and shoulder pain. In the Vision Council's study, 27.7 percent of adults experienced headaches while another 27.9 percent of them experienced blurred vision. 35 percent also reported neck and shoulder pain. This study makes it evident that with digital technology increasing every day, many people are suffering from physical discomfort from staring at a screen for too long.

The Vision Council also found that children are also suffering from these physical discomforts as well. Almost 70 percent of American adults reported that their children spent more than two hours looking at the screens of a device per day. Not only did this give those children physical discomfort, but it also reduced the attention span of 15.2 percent of those children and 13.5 percent experienced irritability. This study shows the effects of the advent of technology in our world on the health of not only adults, but children as well.

With such arising health concerns, many solutions, including wearing eyewear, have surfaced. This does not however, eliminate the fact that technology is affecting our health. It is

highly recommended to limit your screen time and take breaks every now a then. Witten urges people to grab a book or go for a walk during breaks from screen time.

Witten's last attack was different. Unlike her other two arguments, her third attack was in favor of technology. She does believe that technology has also provided us with some positive opportunities in terms of our health. Present day technology is capable of keeping track of our personal health and has even made it fun in some cases. There are now applications that reward you for the number of steps you take or even donate to charity for the number of miles you run.   Witten believes that "this technology positively impacts not only our health, but also our passions for meaningful causes."

It all comes down to the different types of technology and how people go about using it. Throughout the years, technology in the field of healthcare and medicine has advanced to a point where conjoined twin infants can safely be separated, whereas before this technology it wouldn't have been a surprise if the twins did not survive. These advancements in technology have helped many people around the world with their health conditions.

Technology doesn't have to be too advanced to help us. Something as simple as "Chatbots" guiding new mothers into taking care of their newborn or learning to breastfeed for the first time is beneficial. The advancements and growing nature of technology has a positive effect on the healthcare of present and future of humanity.

In terms of health, we, as conscious human beings, are responsible for how we use technology. If you sit in front of a computer for hours throughout the day or have your eyes glued to your phone even while using the bathroom, the negative effects of such misuse will not fail to surface.

Using your phone in one's daily life does not make one lazy. Cell phones are a tool we can all use to make our lives easier. Technology makes completing tasks more convenient and less time consuming. The time that it will save you should be spent on going for walks, reading a book, playing a sport and/or spending time out with friends/family. Yet, a great number of us will choose Netflix on their spare time rather than a walk.

All in all, the effects of technology on our health is entirely on ourselves. The negative effects can be avoided depending on how we go about using technology and the time it frees up in our daily lives. We get to choose how long we spend on our computers or our phones and what to do with our free time. Technology has made it easier for us to do many things and this ease has created valuable time— time that should be spent on personal goals. The positive effects of technology on our health are up to our discretion. The more we advance and develop technology, the better our surgeries can go, the more diseases can be cured, and the more lives can be saved. How technology affects us is ultimately our choice. We shouldn't make use of excellent technology; we should make excellent use of technology.

Work Cited

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