Seen At 11: Would You Give Your Life For Gaming?

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NEW YORK (CBSNewYork) — Just about everybody plays video games, they're an accepted part of our tech-connected life.

But the billion dollar industry may also be making some players sick, or worse. As CBS2's Dick Brennan reported, some people are even dying to play.

"You're streaming for 8 to 10 hours during the day," Joe Marino said.

Playing video games was Marino's life and livelihood.

"You're not getting up and leaving your desk, because that's where you lose your viewers," he said.

Marino, known as 'Geek Domo' had more than 40,000 followers on the gaming platform Twitch.

"And then I would be working for another 6 to 7 hours on my social media," he said.

It's not uncommon for some professional gamers to play 18 hours straight or more online.

This past February, Marino's friend — a popular player named Brian Vignault — was nearing the end of a 24 hour streaming marathon. He got up for a smoke and was later found dead.

Marino went to his own doctor for a checkup.

"I had 100 percent blockage on the backside of my heart, and 75 percent blockage on three arteries at the top of your heart called 'the widow maker," he said.

After surgery, Marino said he's in much better shape, limits his games, and has a new career as a photographer.

"It's usually related to other activities or habits; your diet, your lack of exercise, it's never just the game," Mashable, Chief Correspondent, Lance Ulanoff said.

Ulanoff said the sedentary gaming lifestyle is likely a contributing factor for some gamers' ills. Research has linked prolonged sitting with obesity, cardiovascular disease, and other significant problems.

"My gym stream is 2 to 3 hours, and my gaming stream is 6 to 8, a normal work day for me," video and fitness streamer Jackson Bliton said.

Bliton, aka Bajheera, also makes his living streaming play online, but said his fitness streams provide the necessary balance.

"If you're doing it in moderation it can be healthy," Dr. Michael Fraser said.

Fraser, a clinical psychologist, said tech can be a positive outlet, but there needs to be restraint, and self-awareness from the players.

"When you cross the line into compulsive use, excessive use defined by frustration, irritability, difficulty turning it off, difficulty saying no, difficulty imagining life without it, it's time to step back," he said.

Experts advise taking breaks, standing up, moving around, and stretching. Gaming may not be dangerous, but the lifestyle is.