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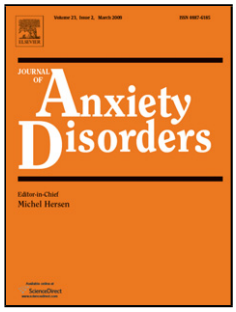

Title: Moving Toward a Metacognitive Conceptualization of Cyberchondria: Examining the Contribution of Metacognitive Beliefs, Beliefs about Rituals, and Stop Signals

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PII: S0887-6185(18)30216-0
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2018.09.003
Reference: ANXDIS 2060

To appear in: *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*

Received date: 31-5-2018
Revised date: 16-8-2018
Accepted date: 28-9-2018

Please cite this article as: Fergus TA, Spada MM, Moving Toward a Metacognitive Conceptualization of Cyberchondria: Examining the Contribution of Metacognitive Beliefs, Beliefs about Rituals, and Stop Signals, *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* (2018), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2018.09.003

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Moving Toward a Metacognitive Conceptualization of Cyberchondria: Examining the Contribution of Metacognitive Beliefs, Beliefs about Rituals, and Stop Signals

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Highlights

- Examined a proposed metacognitive conceptualization of cyberchondria
- Includes metacognitive beliefs about health-related thoughts
- Beliefs about rituals and stop signals distinguish cyberchondria from health anxiety
- Findings from two studies support the metacognitive conceptualization

Abstract

Cyberchondria refers to the repeated use of the Internet to search for health information that leads to negative consequences. The present set of studies examined the tenability of a proposed metacognitive conceptualization of cyberchondria that includes metacognitive beliefs about health-related thoughts, beliefs about rituals, and stop signals. The contribution of those variables to cyberchondria was examined among 330 undergraduate students from a U.S. university in Study 1 and 331 U.S. community respondents in Study 2. All participants reported using the Internet to search for health information. Across both studies, metacognitive beliefs, beliefs about rituals, and stop signals shared positive bivariate associations with cyberchondria and

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