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### CAPSULE

## Facebook can threaten relationships, study says

**A Canadian report finds that postings on the social media site can trigger escalating feelings of jealousy between romantically involved individuals.**

By Melissa Healy

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Never mind the perils of cyber-stalking, cyber-bullying and posting photos that could endanger your future job prospects: Facebook could be ruining your relationship and driving you toward compulsively jealous behavior.

Social psychologists from the University of Guelph in Canada queried college students who were in romantic relationships about their Facebook use. Their preliminary findings, described in the journal *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, suggest that rather than enhancing communication between romantic partners, Facebook use may be fueling wild flights of jealous investigation, as users in relationships perceive hints of potential infidelity and then scramble to find evidence of a partner's unfaithful thoughts or behavior.

Invariably, it seems, they end up feeling more jealous.

And where does this lead? For some participants in the study, these investigations led to searching behavior they described as "addictive." And the bouts of escalating jealousy, say the researchers, cannot be good for a relationship.

While the survey was of college students, the researchers surmised that Facebook might unleash the same dynamics in adult relationships. Certainly, they noted, it's worth further research.

The research team responsible for the latest survey has previously found that young adults' need for popularity led them to disclose far more personal information on Facebook than they would reveal in the course of ordinary social contact.

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