



COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

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Connecting with Professional Support



INTRODUCTION

Gambling is a risky behavior resulting in short term rewards which may result in persistent behavior over time and can be accompanied by adverse consequences. For this reason, it shares many similarities and common features with other forms of addictive behaviors (Grant et al, 2010)



DEFINITION

- TAKING RISKY ACTION IN THE HOPES OF ACHIEVING A DESIRED RESULT
- GAMBLING is also referred to as BETTING or GAMING
- In modern times gambling has come to mean wagering money or/and other belongings on chance activities or events with random or uncertain outcomes (Devereux)



Throughout history, gambling has involved activities requiring skills

Example: a gambler's knowledge of playing strategies which can improve their chances of winning card games or horse racing.

It becomes a health concern (DSM 5 pages 585-589)



Gambling is one of the most insidious of human vices, as it presents the illusion of easy money yet can quickly lead to financial ruin.

The odds are never in your favor whether it is poker, blackjack or anything else; gambling is a successful industry because "the house always wins"



Types of Gambling Addiction

- Gambling is a diverse activity, so different types of gambling addiction exist as well. It is not always obvious when someone is addicted to gambling.
- Gambling is not restricted to slot machines, cards and casinos. Purchasing a lottery ticket, entering a raffle or making a bet with a friend, eSports, and Scratch Cards are also forms of gambling.



Gambling addiction can occur when:

- A person feels that they are in financial ruin and can only solve their problems by gambling what little they have in an attempt to get a large sum of money,
- They need to escape from daily stresses
- Result of mental health disorders and challenges – anxiety, depression, impulsivity, oppositional behavior, high sensation seeking behavior and conduct disorder in adolescents, low resilience.(Shead et al. 2010, Deverensky 2012, Deverensky et al 2019)



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-Environment as a causative factor:

- casinos
- horse racing events
- motor races
- games



CONT:

"The house always wins"-This almost always leads to a cycle in which the gambler feels they must win back their losses, and the cycle goes on until the person is forced to seek rehabilitation to break their habit.



Causes of Gambling

Many factors can contribute to a gambling addiction:

- ✓ desperation for money,
- ✓ the desire to experience thrills and highs,
- ✓ the social status associated with being a successful gambler
- ✓ the entertaining atmosphere of the mainstream gambling scene.
- ✓ Technological advances and pervasiveness in today's culture and excessive use of smartphones
- ✓ Socio-cultural influence – influence of friends, peer groups, family and the broader culture (Roseneg&Feder, 2014)



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Unfortunately, once a gambling addiction takes hold, breaking the cycle is difficult. Severe addictions can take hold when someone feels desperate financially and wants to make back what they have lost.



social cultural causes:

Example: bull fighting and cock fighting, donkey racing among certain communities.



Signs of a Gambling Problem

Common signs of addiction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ❖ Feeling the need to be secretive about gambling
- ❖ Having trouble controlling gambling habits; gambling becomes the most important activity in the persons life and dominates the individuals thinking and behavior.



CONT:

- ❖ Gambling when you cannot afford to, further, feeling the need to increase the time spent or frequency of the gambling to achieve the desired results, mood modification or effects.
- ❖ Your friends and family express concern about your gambling
- ❖ Gambling causes interpersonal conflict, conflicts with work, socialization, hobbies or interests.



- The hallmark sign of a gambling problem is that you feel you cannot stop.
- You feel like you need to try just one more time, or you feel anxious when you think about quitting,

Mood modification so that the individual uses the emotional impact of gambling as a form of psycho escape or as a means of arousal or avoidance of unpleasant events (Griffiths ,2005)



Emotional Symptoms of Gambling

Excessive gambling often causes a multitude of emotional symptoms, including:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts and tendencies.



Physical symptoms of Gambling

- Sleep deprivation, which may result in pale skin.
- Weight gain or weight loss.
- Acne and dark circles under the eyes.



- Gambling addiction frequently results in other addictions that serve as coping mechanisms for people who are stressed out by the activity.
- Many gamblers turn to drugs, alcohol and other activities to alleviate the anxiety brought on by the gambling lifestyle.



Is There a Test I Can Do?

If you think you may have a gambling problem, ask yourself whether you would be okay if you stopped gambling right now.

If you feel anxious or as if you shouldnt stop yet chances are you are suffering from a gambling addiction.



Drug Options for Gambling Disorders

While *gambling cannot be directly treated with medication*, it is possible to alleviate the anxiety and depression that results from gambling and often leads to it in the first place.



- The most common way to treat a gambling problem with medication is to prescribe anti-anxiety and antidepressant medicines.
- Feeling depressed and anxious often exacerbates gambling addiction,

A close-up, partial view of a dartboard on the left side of the image. The dartboard has a wooden frame and segments in red, black, and green. A single silver dart is embedded in the green segment. The background of the slide is a solid dark green.

Depression and Gambling

Because gambling addiction is often associated with depression, watch out for signs that you are, or your loved one is, suffering from this debilitating disorder.

- Lethargy,
- fatigue,
- change in appetite and
- unhappiness are several symptoms out of many that someone is suffering from depression.

Depression is often not something that can be controlled easily.



Getting Help to Quit Gambling

- Quitting gambling is no easy feat, but it can be done with the help of a solid support group and treatment programs.

It can be difficult to get started on the path to recovery without the assistance of professionals who have helped people through the process before. Supportive friends and family are vital to a full recovery, but they might not know how best to help you.

(Vinwood B.P ,Preddy V.R Handbook of Substance Misuse and Addictions Vol 4)



Thank you

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