

# GAMBLING AWARENESS

## Gambling and Co-Occurring Disorders



March is coming to a close, but don't worry you can still learn more about Gambling Disorders! You have now received information on gambling & elders persons affected, gambling & homelessness. You have

external resources within these topics as well as a team within the building with knowledge specific to the topic! Let the "March" to gambling awareness continue with information on co-occurring disorders!

### ISSUE #4, MARCH 2015

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Introduction to Co-Occurring Disorders and Gambling

Against the Odds, Documentary

Research Recommendations for Clinicians

Link to external readings - Cambridge Health Alliance

Thank you! Bettor Choice Team

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[Link to the YouTube video](#)

[\*\*Against All Odds, Part 4 of 4\*\*](#)

## What is the relationship between gambling and other mental health disorders?

Research within both treatment seeking samples and the general population agree on the prevalence of co-occurring disorders along with gambling disorder. Clinicians have multiple opportunities to assess and assist people presenting with substance disorders, mood disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, and anxiety disorders within the treatment process. These are the most often occurring disorders with gambling. Ranked in order starting with most commonly occurring are substance use disorder, any mood disorder, any anxiety disorder (Lorains, Cowlishaw, & Thomas, 2011). These authors suggest that this co-morbidity may be due to the Pathways Model as outlined by Blaszynski and Nower. Research supports that individuals that present for gambling treatment also screen positively for depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (Soberay, Faragher, Barbash, Brookover, & Grimsley, 2014). Furthermore, within the general population, over 90% of those who meet criteria for a diagnosis of gambling disorder met criteria for a different mental health disorder prior to the onset of a gambling disorder (Kessler et al., 2008). About 50% of individuals within this study report having received treatment for the mental health disorder but not for gambling. Research within this topic indicates a need for ongoing clinical assessment for those individuals who present for behavioral health services, especially those with substance use, mood and anxiety disorders.

Kessler, R.C., Hwang, I., LaBrie, R., Petukhova, M., Sampson, N.A., Winters, K.C., & Shaffer, H.J. (2008). DSM-IV pathological gambling in the national comorbidity survey replication. *Psychological Medicine, 38*, 1351-1360. Doi: 10.1017/S0033291708002900

Lorains, F.K., Cowlishaw, S., & Thomas, S.A. (2011). Prevalence of comorbid disorders in problem and pathological gambling: Systematic review and meta-analysis of population surveys. *Addiction, 106*(3), 490-498. Doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03300.x

Soberay, A., Faragher, J.M., Barbash, M., Brookover, A., & Grimsley, P. (2014). Pathological gambling, co-occurring disorders, clinical presentation, and treatment outcomes at a university-based counseling clinic. *Journal of Gambling Studies, 30*, 61-69. Doi: 10.1007/s10899-012-9357-2

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## Recommendations for Clinicians

Increase your knowledge and understanding of problem gambling and the mental health disorders with high occurrence of existing along with gambling disorder. Instead of only asking the screening question one time, try asking someone how often they engage in specific forms of gambling; lottery, cards for money, slot machines, betting on sports teams. Follow up on answers of yes! You might ask some of the 20 questions from Gamblers Anonymous. Some examples include; Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?, or Have you had to borrow money to finance your gambling?.

Provide feedback, enhance motivation, and provide affirmation when asking about gambling.

Gambling treatment is tailored for each individual. Allowing the individual to decide if abstinence or harm reduction is a great way to enhance motivation for treatment, enhance client autonomy, and open communication about the recovery process.



## Resource with link to Cambridge Health Alliance Basis Online

Direct quote from an editorial retrieved  
from The Basis electronic magazine  
Jodie Neally is the author

“At 50 years old I was living my dream. I loved where I lived, I loved who I was with and I loved what I did...Somehow I felt empty. It was at this moment when the old desires for escape surfaced...Stress, anxiety and a desire to escape all played into this moment when the obsession for gambling took over my life. I began gambling heavily in 2005. By 2007, I had been fired from my job for embezzlement. By 2009, at 55 years old, I was sleeping on top bunk in prison – sentenced to two years for larceny.”

Within the link above, you can read through the Special Series on Gambling Disorders.

Another interesting topic within this series is about Veterans, gambling and post-traumatic stress disorder. This short article gives some reasons to ask more questions when assessing for gambling problems with Veterans. Research is cited that VA patients seeking treatment for mental health services (other disorders besides gambling) were under diagnosed and undertreated for gambling problems. Link to this area of:

[Basis Online - Veterans: Gambling & Co-Occurring Disorders](#)

Thank you for taking the time in the month of March to increase your knowledge of Gambling Disorder. We have enjoyed finding these resources to share with our family and team here at UCFS! We hope that you have enjoyed learning more about Gambling, assessment and the people affected. Please continue to reach out with questions on integrated assessment, or with any questions you may have.

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