



# GAMBLING ADDICTION

## Signs and Symptoms

When we think of addiction, pictures of cigarettes, drugs and alcohol most often come to mind. However, almost anything can become an addiction, when it controls your life rather than you having control of it. Gambling addiction is a rapidly rising phenomenon in our culture, promoted through abundance of daily opportunities to participate. Whether it's playing the lottery, weekend trips on the boats, or online gambling, the result is often the same...addiction.

Not every person who gambles is an addict. Oddly enough, there are people who make a living gambling. However, when the desire to gamble affects or compromises relationships, job performance or quality of life, it becomes a serious issue. According to the National Gambling Commission, at least 1.2% of the American population (about 2.5 million people) are lifelong gamblers. In regions where gambling is more predominant, such as Nevada, the percentage goes up to 5%. Younger people are more prone to the addiction than older adults and men, by far, beat out women in gambling addiction.

Use the following quiz to determine if you or someone you love suffers from problematic gambling:

1. Do you spend much of your free time gambling or arranging gambling opportunities?
2. Do you find your thoughts preoccupied with gambling, even when you're at work or having a conversation with someone?
3. Do you feel a need to bet more money than previously, looking for an opportunity to win more?
4. If you've ever tried to stop gambling, do you find yourself restless and/or highly agitated?
5. Do you feel "high" when you win?
6. Do you struggle with leaving the table after losing, strongly pulled to sticking around to recoup your losses?
7. Do you feel out of control, placing gambling above most other activities in your life?
8. Would you be willing to gamble with money set aside for savings, bills, etc.?
9. Do you believe that winning will solve the problems in your life?
10. Are you always on the lookout for that one great stake that will have made it all worthwhile?

Gambling addiction can lead to financial ruin, job loss and serious relationship issues.

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, please contact  
**Your Employee Assistance Program** today at **1-800-899-3926**.