

RESPONSIBLE GAMING INFORMATION

INFORMED PLAYERS
MAKE HEALTHIER
GAMBLING CHOICES.

STICK TO YOUR GAME PLAN.

The following information has been provided to help clarify common misconceptions about gambling, recognize the warning signs of problem gambling and know where to get help.

There are many opportunities to gamble. You can play casino games, play online games, buy lottery tickets, try your luck at bingo, go to the track or play some other game of chance. While all of these types of gaming activities can be fun and entertaining, they all have an element of risk. People who gamble in a low-risk way see gambling as a form of entertainment. For them, a gambling loss is the cost of entertainment – just like the cost of a restaurant bill or a theatre ticket.

While most gambling doesn't hurt anyone, some people develop gambling problems. For these people, gambling losses can have a substantial impact on their finances and their lives.

MYTHS ABOUT GAMBLING

The fact is that in the long run gambling will cost you money. There are beliefs that can make people believe that they can influence the outcome and win.

MYTH: *If I keep gambling my luck is going to change. I'll win back the money I've lost if I just keep gambling.*

TRUTH: The outcome each time you gamble is completely independent from any other time, so your odds are no more in your favour on your first bet as they are on your tenth. Over time, risking more and more will only create greater losses.

MYTH: *I almost won. This means that I am due for a win.*

TRUTH: Just about winning does not mean that a win is around the corner. What happens in the future is in no way influenced by a near win.

MYTH: *I have a feeling that this is my lucky day.*

TRUTH: Hoping, wishing or needing to win has no influence on the outcome.

MYTH: *If I play more than one slot machine, or in more than one poker game at a time, I'll increase my chances of winning.*

TRUTH: Sure you win more often playing two machines or two poker games versus one. But make no mistake, you also spend and ultimately lose more doing so. Remember, the more you gamble, the more you lose.

MYTH: *My strategy will help me win. For example, picking certain numbers for a lottery or pressing the button of a slot machine at exactly the right time.*

TRUTH: The outcome of all games is random – you cannot influence the outcome. The winning number selection is random and independent from previous draws, so betting the same weekly numbers won't help you win. In fact the odds of winning the Lotto 6/49 are 1 in 14 million each and every time. Slot machines are computers and outcomes are the result of randomly drawn numbers that determine where the reels will stop before they're even set in motion. It doesn't matter when you pull or press.

MYTH: *If I see a certain number coming up often in a poker game, I should bet on it because chances are, this card will be dealt again very soon.*

TRUTH: There are 2.6 million possible hands in a 52-card deck. Since each hand is independent from the last, the chances of a certain card coming up again are no greater than the chance of any other card coming up. In fact, the chance of the card coming up is no more and no less than the chances it had when it first came up.

SIGNS OF A PROBLEM

What is problem gambling? Problem gambling is excessive gambling that negatively affects key areas of a person's life: physical or mental health, school or work performance, finances and relationships.

There are a number of risky behaviours that may indicate a gambling problem. Some of these include:

- Constantly thinking or talking about gambling.
- Spending more time or money on gambling than you can afford.
- Finding it difficult to control, stop, or cut down gambling, or feeling irritable when trying to do so.
- Feeling a sense of emptiness or loss when not gambling.
- Gambling more in order to win back losses or get out of financial trouble.
- Thinking that your gambling will get under control as soon as you have a 'big win'.
- Borrowing money, selling things, committing (or considering committing) criminal acts in order to get money for gambling.
- Having increased debt, unpaid bills, or other financial troubles because of your gambling.
- Often gambling until all of your money is gone.
- Needing to gamble with larger amounts of money or for longer periods of time in order to get the same feeling of excitement.
- Experiencing extreme highs from gambling wins and extreme lows from gambling losses.
- Gambling to escape personal problems or to relieve feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, or loneliness.
- Getting irritated more easily or having less patience when dealing with normal, everyday activities.
- Feeling guilty about gambling or what happens while gambling.
- Getting criticized by others for your gambling.
- Having arguments with friends or family about money and gambling.
- Refusing to discuss gambling with others or lying to cover it up.

- Hiding bills, past due notices, winnings, or losses from your partner or family member.
- Gambling instead of attending family or other social functions.
- Neglecting family or household responsibilities because of gambling.
- Neglecting work because of gambling.
- Neglecting personal needs (e.g., for food, sleep, hygiene) because of gambling.
- Consistently or always planning holidays where gambling is available.

TIPS FOR KEEPING GAMBLING FUN

For those who choose to gamble, there are some general principles that can help to make gambling safer and reduce the risk that problems will occur.

1. Don't think of gambling as a way to make money

The bottom line is that gambling establishments, like land based casinos and Internet casinos are set up to take in more money than they pay out. This means over time, you will lose more money than you win. But, remember it's not just casinos, all forms of gambling have the same principle – the vast majority lose so that a very small minority can have big wins. Virtually all people with gambling problems hold the false expectation that they are the ones who will be the big winners. That belief feeds the problem.

2. Always gamble with money that you can afford to lose

Gamble with money that you set aside for fun, like going to the movies or going out for drinks. Never use money that you need for important things, like rent, bills, tuition, etc.

3. Set a money limit

Decide how much money you can afford to lose before you play. When you have lost that amount of money, quit. If you win – enjoy, but remember it won't happen most of the time.

4. Set a time limit

Decide how much time you can afford to spend gambling. When you reach that time limit, stop gambling.

5. Never chase losses

If you lose money, never try to get it back by going over your limit. This usually leads to even bigger losses.

6. Don't gamble when depressed or upset

It's hard to make good decisions about gambling when you are feeling down.

7. Balance gambling with other activities

It's important to enjoy other activities so that gambling doesn't become too big a part of your life.



The NBLGC gratefully acknowledges materials developed by the Responsible Gambling Council

FIND HELP

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS EXPERIENCING A GAMBLING PROBLEM, HELP AND SERVICES ARE OFFERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

CALL 1-800-461-1234 FOR FREE, CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.