

## *Fact Sheet*

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**Student Health Services, Texas A&M University**

### **Problem Gambling**

#### **What is Problem Gambling?**

“Problem gambling is gambling behavior which causes disruptions in any major area of life: psychological, physical, social or vocational (National Council on Problem Gambling, 2007).”<sup>1</sup>

Problem gambling is further classified as “a progressive addiction characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, “chasing” losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting, serious, negative consequences (NCPG, 2007).”<sup>1</sup>

#### **Statistics:**

- 72% of student athletes have gambled at least once since entering college<sup>1</sup>
- 45% of male athletes gamble on sports<sup>1</sup>

#### **10 Questions about your gambling behavior:**

- You have often gambled longer than you had planned.
- You have often gambled until your last dollar was gone.
- Thoughts of gambling have caused you to lose sleep.
- You have used your income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid.
- You have made repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling.
- You have broken the law or considered breaking the law to finance your gambling.
- You have borrowed money to finance your gambling.
- You have felt depressed or suicidal because of your gambling losses.
- You have been remorseful after gambling.
- You have gambled to get money to meet your financial obligations.

*If you answered YES to any of these questions, consider seeking assistance from a professional regarding this gambling behavior (NCPG, 2007).*

#### **Am I at Risk for Problem Gambling?**

Problem gambling can affect anyone regardless of gender, age, race or ethnicity, income level or socio-economic status, education level, etc. Anyone can be affected by problem gambling.

### **Risk Factors of a Problem Gambler:<sub>1</sub>**

- Stressful life event such as the death of a loved one, divorce, job loss, injury/disability.
- An early big win.
- Pre-existing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, alcoholism.
- Family history of addictions such as, alcoholism, compulsive gambling, drug addiction.

### **Signs and of a College Problem Gambler:<sub>2</sub>**

- Preoccupied with gambling (i.e. reliving past gambling experiences planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
- Secretive about his/her gambling habits, and defensive when confronted
- Trying unsuccessfully to control, cut back or stop gambling
- Increasing bet amounts when gambling in order to achieve desired excitement (“high”).
- Restless or irritable when not gambling.
- “Chasing” losses with more gambling.
- Lying about the extent of gambling.
- Using financial aid money or other needed money, or committing crimes to finance gambling.
- Missing classes, work or social events because of gambling.
- Relying on family members, roommates friends or others to bail him/her out to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling.

### **Where to Get Help:**

*Student Counseling Center:*

**979-845-4427** for individual counseling

[Http://scs.tamu.edu](http://scs.tamu.edu)

*Texas Gamblers Anonymous: Houston*

**1-888-442-7105** for group meetings and referrals

[www.texasga.org](http://www.texasga.org)

*National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline:*

**1-800-522-4700** for counseling and referrals

[www.ncpgambling.org](http://www.ncpgambling.org)

### **References:**

National Council on Problem Gambling (2007), [www.ncpgambling.org](http://www.ncpgambling.org).

Lane County Problem Gambling Prevention (2007), [http://www.co.lane.or.us/prevention/gambling/college\\_signs\\_PG.htm](http://www.co.lane.or.us/prevention/gambling/college_signs_PG.htm).