

Caring for your Loved One with GAMBLING DISORDER

Gambling Disorder sufferers are not able to control their gambling behaviour, resulting in health decline, financial and legal woes, and increased likelihood of exhibiting aggression. It negatively affects not only the sufferer but also their loved ones. There are three types defined by symptom severity.

3 Main Types of Gambling Disorder:



MODERATE / AT RISK GAMBLING
Behaviours that are likely to develop into psychological, social and financial damage.



PROBLEM GAMBLING
Difficulty in putting limits on money and/or time consumed with a gambling addiction with negative effects.



PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING
Persevering and repeating dysfunctional gambling behaviour resulting in substantial detriment.

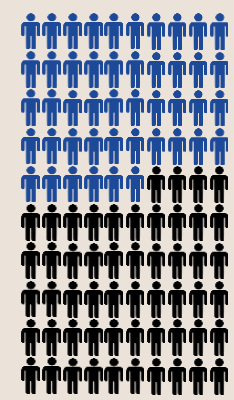
Related Symptoms



According to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.)*, the sufferer would exhibit 4 or more of the following symptoms within the last 12 months:

- Is compelled to gamble with greater amounts of money to feel the desired elation or excitement.
- Feels irritable or restless when trying to reduce or cease gambling behaviour.
- Has repeatedly tried unsuccessfully to manage, reduce or cease gambling.
- After losing money, will return the following day to try to win it back.
- Gambles when feeling distressed.
- Persistently thinks about gambling like reliving past wins, planning the next gambling experience, and plotting ways to access more money to gamble with.
- Lies to hide their gambling behaviour.
- Has risked or lost an important relationship, job or a career or educational opportunity due to their gambling behaviour.
- Depends on other people to provide money to alleviate a critical financial predicament created by their gambling behaviour.

Prevalence



46%
8%
2%

of Australian adults are at risk of gambling harm.

of Australian adults had 1+ gambling-related problem/s in the last 12 months.

of Australian adults have a severe case of Gambling Disorder.

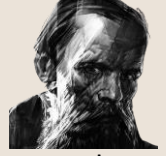
Famous People with Gambling Disorder



Ben Affleck



George Clooney



Fyodor Dostoevsky



Michael Jordan



Gladys Knight



Tiger Woods

Known Causes and Triggers

CAUSES

Genetic influences?
40% of problem gamblers have a problem gambling parent.

Biological influences?
Possible contribution of dopaminergic and serotonergic genes in rising susceptibility to Gambling Disorder.

Neurobiological influences?

Gambling Disorder association with differences in the frontostriatal and limbic regions of the brain including the hippocampus and amygdala, relating to reward or excitement sensitivity, loss-chasing conduct, stress mismanagement and social-emotional challenges.

TRIGGERS

Gambling Disorder has a co-morbidity of 75% with other mental disorders. When other mental disorders like mood disorders, substance abuse, and anxiety disorders flare up, it could trigger the compulsion to chase that high derived from gambling and winning.

- Boredom.
- Negative emotional states like depression, loneliness.
- Being exposed to reminders to gamble like advertising.
- Access to more money.
- Financial woes.
- Social influences.
- Negative interpersonal events like family conflicts.
- Wanting to feel good, chasing that high from winning at gambling.

How to Support Your Loved One with Gambling Disorder (GD)



Manage your own well-being physically, mentally and emotionally to increase resilience

It is not your fault.

Seek **support** through therapy or support groups. Learn to **cope** with hopelessness, anger, guilt and betrayal. Learn to **handle** your loved one's GD lapses and relapses. **Don't lie** or deceive for your loved with GD. Let them be accountable for their gambling behaviour. **Spend time** with other people and **confide** in those you trust.



Manage your children's well-being physically, mentally and emotionally to increase resilience

Ensure they have **enough** food and clothing. Do regular **family** activities. Encourage them to **socialise** with other family and friends. Monitor and support their **progress** at school. Encourage them to **participate** in school and sporting activities. Encourage them to **talk** about their thoughts and feelings. **Avoid involving** them in solving family problems caused by GD. **Avoid arguing** about GD effects in front of them.



Monitor and take control of your finances to minimise negative impact

Establish a **separate** bank account your loved one with GD does not have access to. Make a family **budget**. **Track** family spending. Pay the bills **yourself**. **Do not share** PINs. **Remove** your name from shared credit cards. **Lock away** your valuables out of sight. Seek **legal advice** and **support** like review your will to ensure any future inheritance is not lost to gambling.



Minimise your loved one's exposure to opportunities and temptations to gamble

Keep them **busy** with an **active** social life, work responsibilities, parental responsibilities and leisure activities. Seek ways to help the loved one **feel good about themselves** like praising them as a partner, parent, family member, highlighting their talent, and validating their good ideas. **Alert** family and friends to refrain from lending money to the loved one.



Restore your relationship with your loved one without enabling their GD behaviour

Be honest and transparent (to a point) with your loved one. Tell them the harm they are having on the family with their GD. Assure them you are there to support (not enable) them. Don't try to control their life. It will not work and you will be unhappy. Seek therapy with the loved one with GD. Engage in fun activities or moments with the loved one with GD without discussing gambling problems.

For additional support:

[Gambler's Help](https://gamblershelp.com.au/get-help/families-and-friends/)
<https://gamblershelp.com.au/get-help/families-and-friends/>

[Gambling Help Online](https://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/)
<https://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/>

[BetSafe](https://www.betsafe.com.au/help_for_gamblers/help_for_family_members)
https://www.betsafe.com.au/help_for_gamblers/help_for_family_members



Use this QR code to contact the 3Chairs team.