

# Problem Gambling and Co-Occurring Disorders

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- ▶ 70% of U.S. of adults gambled at least 1X in last year.
- ▶ Called the “Hidden Addiction.”
- ▶ Drug of choice is money to stay in the game.
- ▶ Not much research or “Best Practices.”
- ▶ High rates of comorbid addiction and compulsive behaviors, (alcohol, drugs, spending, and sex).
- ▶ High rates of substance abusers in treatment have pathological gambling, (Cunningham-Williams, et. al., 2000)

- ▶ Drug users with Antisocial Personality Disorder 2X likely to be gamblers.
- ▶ Prevalence of problem gambling 10X higher in substance abuse population.
- ▶ 15-20% of pathological gamblers report a significant suicide rate.
- ▶ To not screen for gambling during substance abuse assessment is **UNCONSCIONABLE!**

(Ciarrocchi, 2002)

# Social and Policy Costs : Rates of Arrest and Incarceration

Type of consequence	Non-gambler	Low-risk	At-risk	Problem Gambler	Pathological gambler
Arrested	4.5	11.1	20.7	36.3	32.3
Incarcerated	0.4	3.7	7.8	10.4	21.4

(Norc, 1999)

# Rates of Divorce/Health Status

Status	Non-gambler	Low-risk	At-risk	Problem Gambler	Pathological Gambler
Divorced	18.2	29.8	36.3	39.5	53.5
Poor/fair Health	21.8	13.9	16.0	16.4	31.1
Mental Health RX	6.9	6.5	5.8	12.8	13.3
					(Norc, 1999)

- ▶ Pathological gambling has been associated with serious mental illness, sometimes as the cause and other times as the result of an untreated mental illness.
- ▶ When treating those with a gambling addiction, all of their disorders should be identified and portrayed for treatment.

- ▶ Pathological gambling is associated with Health Related Quality of Life.
- ▶ Negative economic and psychological effect on individuals and families.
  - ▶ Average annual impact \$1200.00.
  - ▶ 14% have lost at least 1 job.
  - ▶ 19% have declared bankruptcy.
  - ▶ 32% have been arrested.
  - ▶ 21% have been incarcerated.
  - ▶ 54% have been divorced.

(Scherrer, et. al. 2005)

# Problem Gambling and Co-Occurring Disorders

## *Biological Factors*

### Risk Factors

Close biological relative with a disorder  
Personality traits (high risk)  
Gender  
Ethnicity

### Protective Factors

No family history of substance use, gambling or mental health problems.  
Adaptive personality traits

## *Environmental Factors*

### Risk Factors

Life Stressors  
Relationship issues  
Health & mental health

### Protective Factors

Coping skills (reduce stress)  
Supportive relationships  
Treating substance use, gambling & mental health problems.

*Substance Use*

*Mental Health*

*Problem Gambling*



## Problem Gambling and Co-Occurring Disorders

***Decoder of 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Relative  
(E.G., Parents, Siblings)***

***Increased Chance to Develop  
Disorder***

Major Depressive Disorder

1.5 to 3 times more likely to develop  
Major Depressive Disorder

Panic Disorder

4 to 7 times more likely to develop  
Panic Disorder

Bipolar I Disorder

4% to 24% more likely to develop  
Major Depressive Disorder

Schizophrenia

10 times more likely to develop  
Schizophrenia

# Prevalence of Psychiatric and Substance Disorder in Problem Gamblers

## Psychiatric Disorder

Manic Episode

3.1

Manic Depression

8.8

Dysthymia

4.2

Schizophrenia

3.9

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

0.9

Panic Disorder

23.3

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

7.7

Phobias

14.6

Somatization

8.6

Antisocial Personality

35.0

## Substance Abuse Disorders

Alcohol Abuse/Dependence

44.4

Drug Use/Dependence

39.9

(Cunningham-Williams et al., 1998)

# Connection between Depression, Substance Abuse, and Problem Gambling

- ▶ Use of alcohol, drugs or gambling can cause depression, either while high or during withdrawal.
- ▶ Observe patient while not using or gambling.
- ▶ Depression may cause use or relapse during negative feelings.

# Assessment of Depression for People Recovering from Addictions

## Symptoms of Depression

- ▶ Depressed Mood- Mood is depressed most of the day, nearly every day.
- ▶ Diminished Interest or Pleasure- Little interest or pleasure in almost all activities, most of the day, nearly every day.
- ▶ Change in Appetite and/or weight- Has lost appetite or weight (when not dieting) or has increased appetite or gained weight.
- ▶ Change in Sleep Pattern- Difficultly falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking early in the morning and not being able to get back to sleep. Or, is sleeping too much.
- ▶ Change in Active Level-A decreased activity level and moving and thinking slower. Or, been feeling agitated, “on edge”, and restless, and has difficulty being still.

## Symptoms of Depression

- ▶ Fatigue or Loss of Energy-Been feeling tired and seems to have no energy nearly every day.
- ▶ Feelings of Worthlessness, or Inappropriate Guilt- Feeling worthless or feeling very guilty nearly every day.
- ▶ Decreased concentration or ability to make decisions- Trouble concentrating, thinking, or making decisions, nearly every day.
- ▶ Recurrent thoughts about death- Thinking about death a great deal, thinking about attempting suicide, or has attempted suicide.

## Bi-Polar Disorder, Substance Abuse and Problem Gambling

- ▶ Bi-Polar usually develops between ages 16-35.
- ▶ Abuse or gambling may contribute significantly to outcomes for Bi-polar patients.
- ▶ Gambling activities can mimic the illness of Bi-polar.
- ▶ Use of drug or gambling by people with bi-polar disorder possibly stems from their discovery of short-term release from symptoms of mania or depression.

## Anxiety Disorder, Substance Abuse, and Problem Gambling

- ▶ Begin using or gambling to lessen symptoms.
- ▶ They may lessen symptoms and help “cope”.
- ▶ Gambling or substance use is a risk factor for anxiety.

## Schizophrenia, Substance Abuse, and Problem Gambling.

- ▶ Schizophrenia is major psychiatric disorder in 1% of population.
- ▶ Typically full blown in late teen or early 20's after high period of stress.
- ▶ Change in brain chemicals.
- ▶ Often use substances or gamble to self medicate.
- ▶ Attempt to “Normalize” life.
- ▶ Thoughts of winning may include fantasy to fit in.