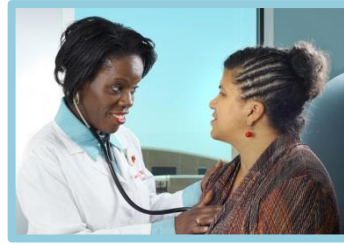


Gambling in Primary Care Patients • Fact Sheet

Between 5% and 16% of patients in primary care clinics have gambling problems¹⁻⁴



PGS PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES

What is gambling?

The act of risking something of value, including money and property, on an activity that has an uncertain outcome.

What is social gambling? Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, will not risk more than they can afford, and often gamble with friends. They gamble for a limited period of time and are not preoccupied with gambling.

MISSION of PGS
To provide a comprehensive network of consumer oriented problem gambling recovery services for people of Connecticut and to foster an environment throughout the State that promotes informed choices around gambling behavior.

Compared to patients without gambling problems, patients with gambling problems have:

- Poorer general health³⁻⁵
- Greater numbers of physical conditions⁶
- Increased health care utilization, including:
 - More inpatient hospitalizations⁶
 - More Emergency Room visits⁵



Gambling problems are also linked with medical conditions and problems, such as:

- Heartburn⁴
- Migraines/frequent headaches⁶
- Backaches⁴
- Liver disease⁵
- Heart conditions (tachycardia, angina)⁵



Gambling problems in primary care patients are related to mental health conditions as well:

- Alcohol problems and binge drinking^{1,2,4,7}
- Illicit drug use^{1,7}
- Smoking^{4,7}
- Depression and suicidality^{1,6,7}



! Primary care physicians rarely assess for gambling problems, and few are aware of gambling treatment options.^{8,9}
Fewer than 10% of people with gambling problems receive treatment.¹⁰

Treatment for gambling is effective.

- Over half of persons treated for gambling substantially reduce their gambling.¹¹⁻¹³
- Psychiatric distress and symptoms decrease markedly with gambling treatment.^{11,13}

SUGGESTED ACTION STEPS

- 1. Screen primary care patients for gambling problems.** Medical clinics, especially those that serve patients with low incomes, have high rates of gambling problems in their patients.^{3,14}
- 2. Provide treatment to patients with gambling problems.** Assessment and brief interventions can reduce gambling markedly, even in medical patients not seeking gambling treatment.¹⁵



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