

Common Consequences of Problem Gambling



Physical Health

- Changes in appetite and sleep
- Symptoms from stress and anxiety
- Headaches or chronic pain
- Gastro-intestinal disorders
- Cardiac problems
- High blood pressure
- Other health concerns develop or worsen

Mental Health

- Feeling depressed, guilty, lonely, irritable, anxious, nervous, restless
- Being on edge, detached, withdrawn
- Mood swings or emotional outbursts (anger, despair)
- Seeing self as bad, stupid, undisciplined, worthless
- Seeing self as superior e.g. the most gifted sports bettor
- Suicidal thoughts or attempts



Relationships

- Preferring gambling to other activities (e.g. outings with friends/family, exercise)
- Showing signs of stress, preoccupation, or irritability when with others
- Being deceptive, secretive, distant, or vague about gambling involvement or debt
- Minimizing concerns expressed by others (e.g. loved ones, teachers, co-workers)
- Distancing oneself from sexual/intimate relationships



Vocational/Academic

- Unexplained absences from work or school
- High number of sick days
- Not meeting obligations at home, school or work
- Unfinished assignments or work
- Drop in grades or work performance



Financial/Legal

- Increasing debt, borrowing money from friends/parents, unexplained disappearance of savings
- Using credit cards to gamble
- Stealing money from friends/family
- Engaging in crime e.g. theft, embezzlement
- Second job with no change in financial status
- Changes in spending priorities/habits
- Selling off investments
- Selling valuables



Gambling Behaviour

- Unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling or to cut back
- Borrowing money to continue gambling or to pay gambling debts
- Losing track of time, people and money when gambling
- Preoccupation with gambling
- Increasing the amounts and frequency of wagers
- Having unrealistic expectations of winning
- Gambling to win back losses ('chasing losses')