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UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The Maryland Center of Excellence  
on Problem Gambling

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**mdproblemgambling.com**

Promoting healthy and informed choices regarding gambling and problem gambling through treatment, prevention, training and education, outreach and public awareness, research and public policy to all Marylanders.



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**PROBLEM GAMBLING**

## What is Gambling?

Gambling is any activity that involves risking something of value, including but not limited to money or property, on an event whose outcome is uncertain.

**Many types of gambling are available in Maryland. Legal forms of gambling include:**

- Lottery — Lotto and Instant (Scratch Off) Tickets
- Casino — Slot Machines, Video Poker Machines, Dice, Bingo and Card Games
- Roulette
- Keno
- Bingo
- Stock Market

**Illegal forms of gambling include:**

- Sports Betting
- Animal and Bird Fights
- Street Games
- House Games

## How can I keep gambling safe and fun?

- Talk to your counselor about your choice to gamble.
- Decide on your personal low risk gambling plan.
- Know your personal high risk situations.
- Continue to monitor how gambling is effecting your life and your recovery.

**RESOURCES**

## Gambling and Recovery

### Know the Risks

**helpmygamblingproblem.org**

*A resource for help with gambling problems*

**gamblesafewomen.org**

*A resource for women*

**Baltimoredicezombies.org**

*A resource for teens*

**Baltimorepromgamble.org**

*A resource for teens*

**Baltimoregambler.org**

*A resource for residents of Baltimore*

**abovealldds.org**

*A resource for college students and young adults*

**asiangamblingsos.org**

*A resource for the Asian community*

### FUNDED BY:

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene / Behavioral Health Administration

# What is the difference between Low and High Risk Gambling?

## Low Risk Gambling:

- Done with awareness that over time nearly everyone loses
- Done socially with friends or family, not alone
- Done for limited amount of time (frequency and duration)
- Done with predetermined, acceptable amounts of money

## High Risk Gambling:

- Done believing you will make money or solve financial problems
- Done alone
- Done to escape feeling bored, sad, anxious, angry or lonely
- Done with borrowed money
- Done when high or intoxicated

## Signs That Gambling May Be a Problem in Your Recovery

- Having thoughts or cravings about substance use when gambling (*when winning or losing*)
- Gambling as a way to deal with cravings to drink or use drugs
- Gambling in places or with people that trigger thoughts of drinking or using.
- Gambling more often than usual
- Gambling increasing amounts of money
- Gambling more time and/or money than you intended
- Borrowing money to gamble, or gambling on credit
- Not wanting others to know how often you gamble or how much money you have spent gambling
- Gambling rather than participating in recovery activities (*Going to meetings, being with family, talking to sponsor*)

## Don't Gamble with Your

# RECOVERY

## Comments from People in Recovery:

Gambling has become a very common and acceptable part of our community. The vast majority of adults in Maryland (90%) have gambled in their lifetime.

For most of these adults gambling is a social or recreational activity that does not cause any problems. However, gambling can cause serious problems for some people and even become an addiction just like drinking or drug use.

### Did You Know?

If you have a substance use disorder you have a much higher risk for developing problems with gambling.

It is therefore important to understand how gambling may effect your recovery and how to make recovery oriented choices about the role of gambling in your life.

Because gambling is such a common activity most people do not think much about the decision to gamble. It just seems to be a normal and natural thing that "everyone" does. Particularly if you are in recovery, it is important to give some serious thought to whether gambling will be helpful or harmful to your recovery. If you do chose to gamble it is very important to think about and plan to reduce the risk of gambling becoming a problem or creating problems for your recovery.

*"Gambling gives me the same kind of rush cocaine did."*

*"I never made the connection, but when I won gambling, I always went and got high."*

*"When I was first sober, I went to the casino. I won a jackpot and before I knew it I was drinking and celebrating."*

*"I never talked about this, but my husband has a real gambling problem and when he loses, he gets mean and abusive."*

*"My kids came home and took the dice and money out of the monopoly game. I asked them what they were doing and they said they were shooting craps like the guys on the street. I didn't know what to do."*

As these comments suggest, it isn't only your gambling that may create a problem in your recovery. The gambling of someone close to you or in your family may also create stress in your life and recovery.

[HelpMyGamblingProblem.org](http://HelpMyGamblingProblem.org)