

Gambling. Do I have a problem?

Key Points

Excessive gambling is associated with a host of problems

when your gambling is getting out of control

Where to find help

Australians are some of the biggest gamblers in the world. We bet on the races, gamble online, enjoy a flutter at the casino or pub, and cross our fingers for lotteries and scratchies.

All of these are relatively harmless in small doses, but when money for food, fuel and housing ends up lining the pockets of the gambling industry, we have to reflect on what is really going on.

Excessive gambling is associated with a host of problems: relationship breakdown, job loss, poor physical health, and even criminal behaviour, all arise from problem gambling. What starts off as a harmless flutter can end up ruining not only the gambler's life, but the lives of their loved ones too.

How do you know when your gambling is getting out of control?

Controlled gambling with money you can afford to lose isn't a problem. Beyond this however, gambling can become an addiction which destroys the lives of gamblers, their families and their friends. How can you tell if your gambling is a problem?

1. You struggle not to gamble despite the negative consequences

Problem gamblers will often find that their lives start falling apart, but they struggle to do the one thing which will make the biggest difference

2. You have trouble setting limits on how long, and how much, you gamble

Problem gamblers will often end up spending more on gambling than they intended, and can see hours of gambling go by in what seems like no time at all

3. You lie to others about your gambling

Problem gamblers often resort to lying to family, friends and colleagues in an effort to mask their gambling

4. Your gambling takes priority over work or spending time with family & friends

Someone with a gambling problem often spends so much time gambling or thinking about gambling that they don't have time for anyone else

5. You see gambling as a way to fix financial problems

Problem gamblers generally end up gambling in an effort to fix their financial problems, it's no longer something they do for fun



Converge International is your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. To make an appointment or speak to a consultant:

1300 our eap
1300 687 327

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What can you do if you have a gambling problem?

You are not alone if you struggle with gambling. In Australia, it is estimated that between 80,000 and 160,000 people suffer significant problems from their gambling. Help is available, but you have to take the first step to accept this help.

1. Don't do it alone

If there are friends or family that you trust, speak to them about what is happening. If there isn't, speak with a professional for assistance.

2. Seek professional help

Free and confidential support is just a phone call away. You can call Gambler's Help **1800 858 858** for immediate telephone support, or call Converge International on **1300 687 327** to arrange to see one of our experienced counsellors.

3. Limit your access to cash

If you're going somewhere that you might be tempted to gamble, make sure you don't have easy access to more cash than you really need to; if you gamble online, get rid of your credit cards

4. Focus on problem solving

Problem gamblers often see gambling as a way to solve or avoid problems; there are much better ways of dealing with problems than gambling

5. Fill your time

If you're cutting back on gambling, you're probably going to end up with a lot of free time; finding something constructive to do with your time can make it easier to overcome the urge to gamble

Converge International's experienced counsellors can help you to see how gambling might be affecting your life, and can help you take concrete steps towards freeing yourself from a gambling addiction. To arrange a free and confidential appointment, call Converge International on **1300 687 327**.

About Converge International

Operating since 1960, Converge International is the pioneer and a major Australian owned international provider of employee assisted services programs across all sectors of industry. To find out more about us, visit our website at www.convergeinternational.com.au or call **1300 687 327**