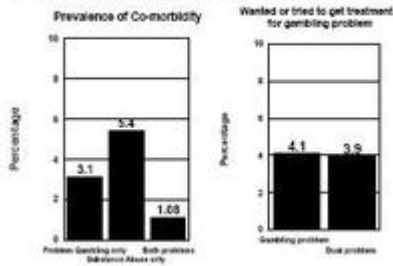


# **The WAGER, Vol. 3(21) - Co-morbidity among Texan adults**

May 26, 1998

A recent study investigated the prevalence of problem gambling and substance abuse among Texan adults in the general population. In addition, this study examined patterns in help-seeking behavior. A random sample of adult Texans were surveyed by telephone about their gambling and substance use, with a response rate of 67%. The South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) was used to classify pathological gamblers (scores of 5 or more) and problem gamblers (scores of 3 or more); in this study all respondents with scores of 3 or more were considered "problem gamblers". Substance abuse was measured by an adapted version of the Inventory of Substance Use Patterns. Of the 6308 respondents, 1.08% met criteria for both "problem gambling" and "substance abuse"-these responses were considered to have "dual-problem status". Three percent (3.1%) met only criteria for "problem-gambling" and 5.4% met only criteria for drug or alcohol problems; both of these groups were considered to have "single-problem status". Compared to the group with neither substance abuse nor gambling problems, single- and dual-problem groups were more likely to be young, male, never married, currently employed, and work at a blue-collar occupation. The single-problem gamblers reported the least criminal involvement and the least contact with mental health practitioners. In contrast, dual-problem respondents were at least twice as likely as single-problem respondents to have gotten in trouble with the law. Four percent (4.1%) of single-problem gamblers and 3.9% of the dual-problem group reported any interest in receiving professional help for their gambling problems. However, a larger proportion of respondents (15% of problem gamblers, 23.5% of substance abusers, and 23.8% of dual-problem respondents) had seen a health professional for a mental health problem. This study confirms previous research that advocates cross-screening for addictive behavior among clients seeking mental health treatment. In addition, this study reveals that problem gamblers who seek treatment are likely to present for care with their chief complaint about drug abuse or other non-gambling problems.

Co-morbidity & Help-seeking Among Texan Adults



**Source:** Feigelman, W., Wallisch, L.S., & Lesieur, H.R. (1998). Problem gamblers, problem substance users, and dual-problem individuals: An epidemiological study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(3), 467-470.

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