

# Tuesday, March 11 is Gambling Disorder Screening Day: Are you going to do a brief screen?

March 7, 2014

Healthcare providers of many different specialties might encounter patients who struggle with gambling. Recent research has indicated that people with gambling-related problems are more likely to smoke, consume excessive amounts of caffeine, have more emergency department visits, and be obese (Black et al. 2012). Some analyses of gambling-related problems in primary care settings estimate that as many as 10% of patients report lifetime gambling disorder, and an additional 5% report lifetime subclinical problems (Morasco et al., 2006). Perhaps equally important, analyses of the National Comorbidity Survey-Replication study data show that, although nearly 50% of people who have gambling problems are in treatment for "something," none currently report being in treatment specifically for gambling (Kessler et al., 2008). In addition, the vast majority of those who have a gambling-related problem also have an antecedent or co-occurring mental health disorders. However, whether providers recognize these problems among their patients is a very different question.

Brief screening for behavioral health problems can help providers identify concomitant behavioral health conditions (Humenuik, Dennington, & Ali, 2008; Madras et al., 2009). In keeping with this strong line of research, the Division on Addiction is promoting a Gambling Disorder screening toolkit and Gambling Disorder Screening Day on March 11, 2014. We chose this date because March is [National Problem Gambling Awareness Month](#). Brief screening for Gambling Disorder is an essential part of increasing awareness and helping people who have gambling problems.

The Gambling Disorder screening toolkit is available [here](#) . Please spread the word and distribute the screening toolkit materials. If you are interested in using a dynamic screening tool, you can find the Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS; Gebauer et al., 2010) in 22 languages [here](#). People who are interested in learning more about the psychometrics of the BBGS can review that information from [a previous edition of The WAGER](#) .

-Debi LaPlante

## References

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