

Introduction to the Special Series on Gambling and Addiction

March 2, 2016

Gambling is an activity that means different things to different people. Most people who gamble do so as a form of recreation. They spend some money and time gambling because it's fun and exciting. However, for some people, gambling is less like going to the movies and more like having a substance use disorder—they feel little control over their gambling, feel anxious and irritable when they try to cut down, and have to lie to friends and family members about their experiences. Researchers are trying to uncover the constellation of risk factors that make some people particularly vulnerable to gambling problems, and this work will take time. We already know, however, that increasing awareness about Gambling Disorder and reducing stigma are effective ways to encourage people to recognize problems and reach out for help. That's why this month, we're joining the [National Council on Problem Gambling](#) to promote [Problem Gambling Awareness Month](#). All four of our science reviews during the month of March will involve Gambling Disorder and its relationship with other expressions of addiction. Additionally, Dr. Debi LaPlante of the Division on Addiction will discuss the importance of screening and provide details about [Gambling Disorder Screening Day](#). We will also have a [first-person commentary](#) on the experience of gambling disorder. We hope you'll enjoy and learn from this Special Series.

— Heather Gray

If you're looking for gambling programs and resources, check what's available at the [National Council on Problem Gambling website](#), including the 24-hour Confidential National Helpline (1-800-522-4700).