



**Alberta Health
Services**

This material is intended for general information only and is provided on an “as is”, “where is” basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Alberta Health Services does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information.

This material is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Alberta Health Services expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.



Alberta Health Services

Knowledge Bites Lunch 'n' Learn

May 24, 2023

Using Canada's Lower Risk Gambling Guidelines in Clinical Practice



David C. Hodgins, PhD., FCAHS

Latest Gambling and Problem Gambling Stats

- 2018 Canadian Community Health Survey – new gambling module
- Not since 2002
- N=24,984, age 15 plus;
- Problem Gambling Severity Index
- Generally reduced gambling overall since 2002 but....

Age18 plus N = 23,952

	2018 overall
Non-gambler	34%
Non-problem (0)	63%
Low risk (1-4)	2.7%
Problem (5+)	0.6%

What is Problem Gambling?

- Gambling Disorder, Pathological Gambling diagnosis- ICD, DSM-5
- Addiction “Compulsive gambling”
- Impaired control over gambling
- Gambling despite negative consequences
- Even non- problem gambling causes harm
- Different types of gambling pose different risks
- Faster/continuous types of gambling pose greater risks
 - Slots, VLTs, Casino table games
- Gambling profits are disproportionately obtained from problem gambling

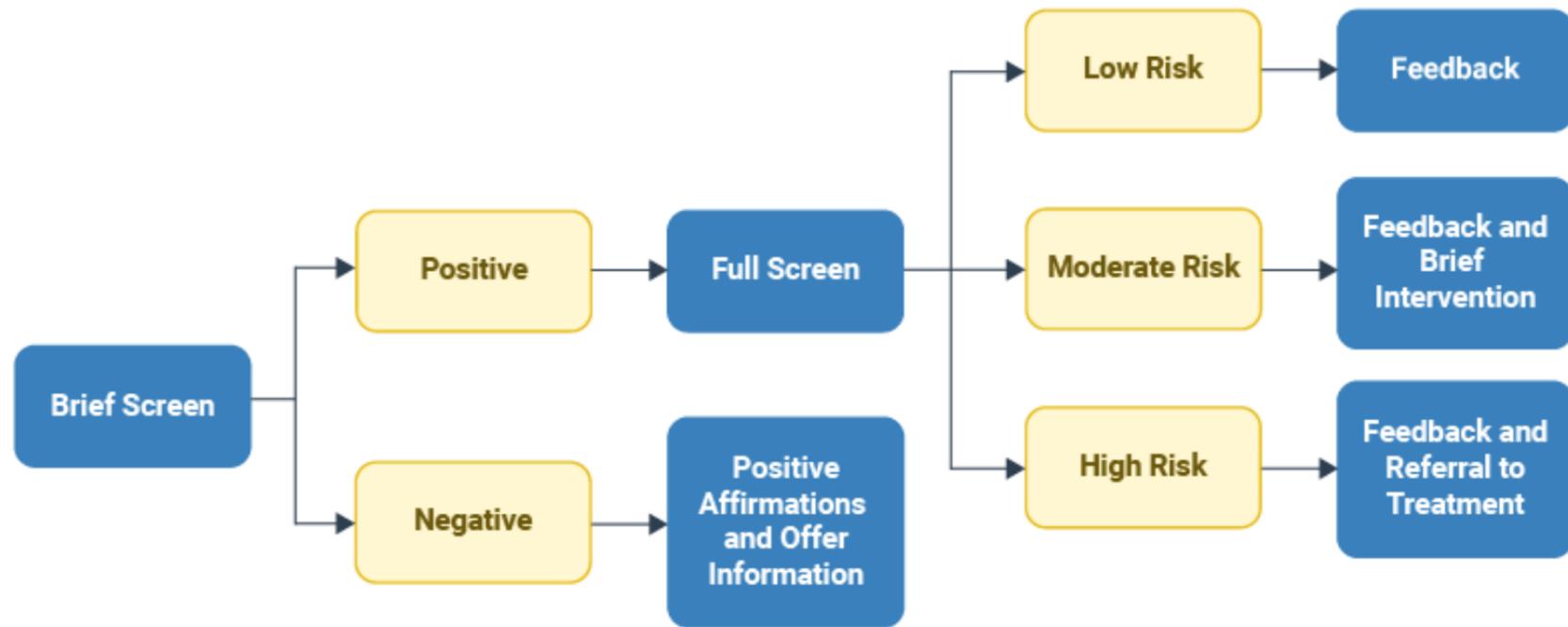
Relevance in Mental Health

- Treatment Services exist- AHS Addiction Services, GA
 - Treatment-seeking is low
 - Stigma
 - Self-recovery
 - Seeking help for comorbidities
- So where might these individuals show up?
- Top comorbidities

Where might gambling problems show up?

- Most common negative impacts:
 - Depression and thoughts of suicide
 - Anxiety and stress
 - Other addictions
 - Family and marital conflict
 - Occupational stress or loss of employment
 - Financial strain
 - Legal difficulties
- Mental health disorders more often precede
 - Self-medication
 - Common vulnerabilities

Screening and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment Model: SBIRT



○ CAMH has a nice toolkit: <https://kmb.camh.ca/ggtu/sbirt-toolkit/>

Screening Questions- Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen

- Have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?
- Have you often gambled longer, with more money or more frequently than you intended?
- Have you made attempts to either cut down, control or stop gambling?

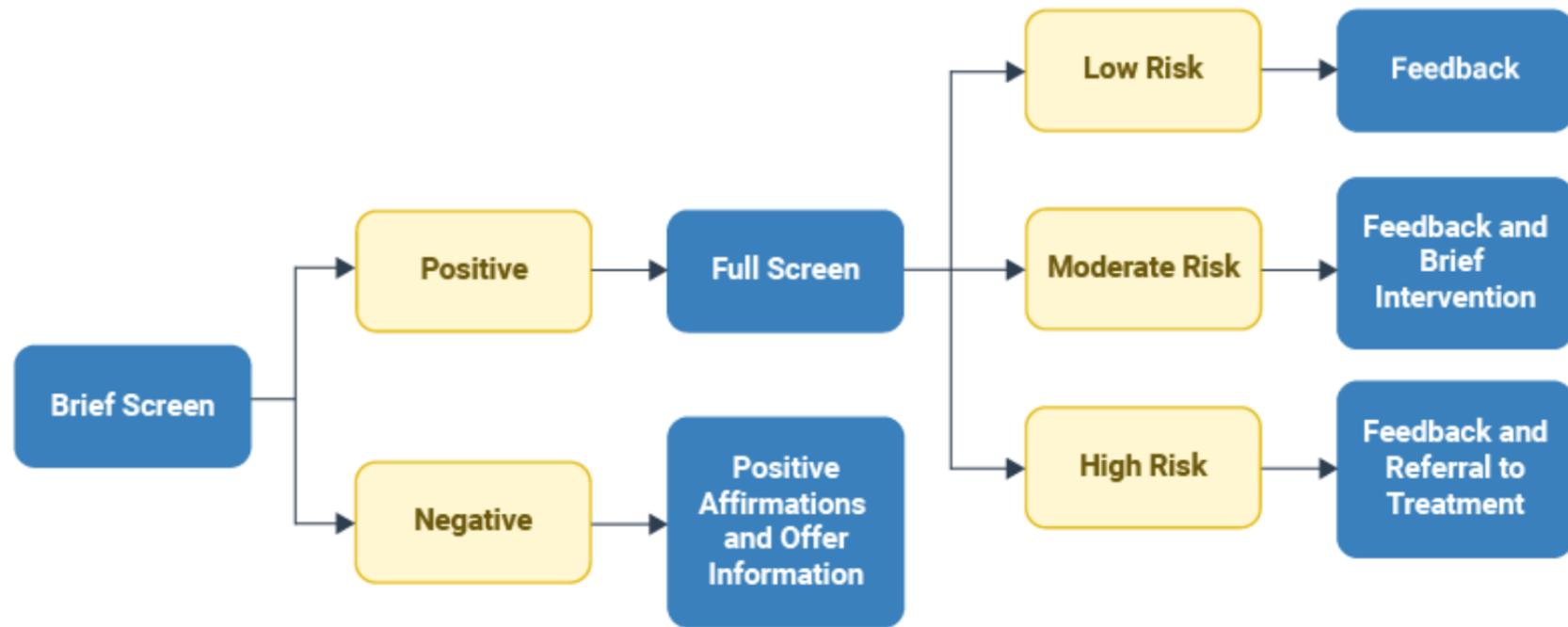
- PPV 0.54
- NPV 0.99

Screening Questions- Lie Bet

- Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?
- Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?

https://www.greo.ca/Modules/EvidenceCentre/files/Dowling%20et%20al%20%282018%29_Screening%20for%20PG%20within%20mental%20health%20services_Final.pdf

Screening and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment Model: SBIRT



○ CAMH has a nice toolkit: <https://kmb.camh.ca/ggtu/sbirt-toolkit/>

Would it be helpful to know what the guidelines are for safer gambling?

- Stimulate reflection on gambling behaviors- focus attention, uncover motivations
- Elicit-Provide- Elicit

www.gamblingguidelines.ca



[Contact Us](#) [Get Help](#) [EN](#) | [FR](#)

[The LRGGs](#) ▾

[Promoting the LRGGs](#) ▾

[Resources](#) ▾

[Risk Assessment Tool](#)

[About the LRGG Project](#) ▾

[Home](#) ▸ [The Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines](#)

[What Are the Guidelines?](#)

[Harms of Gambling](#)

[People at Greater Risk of Gambling Harms](#)

The Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines

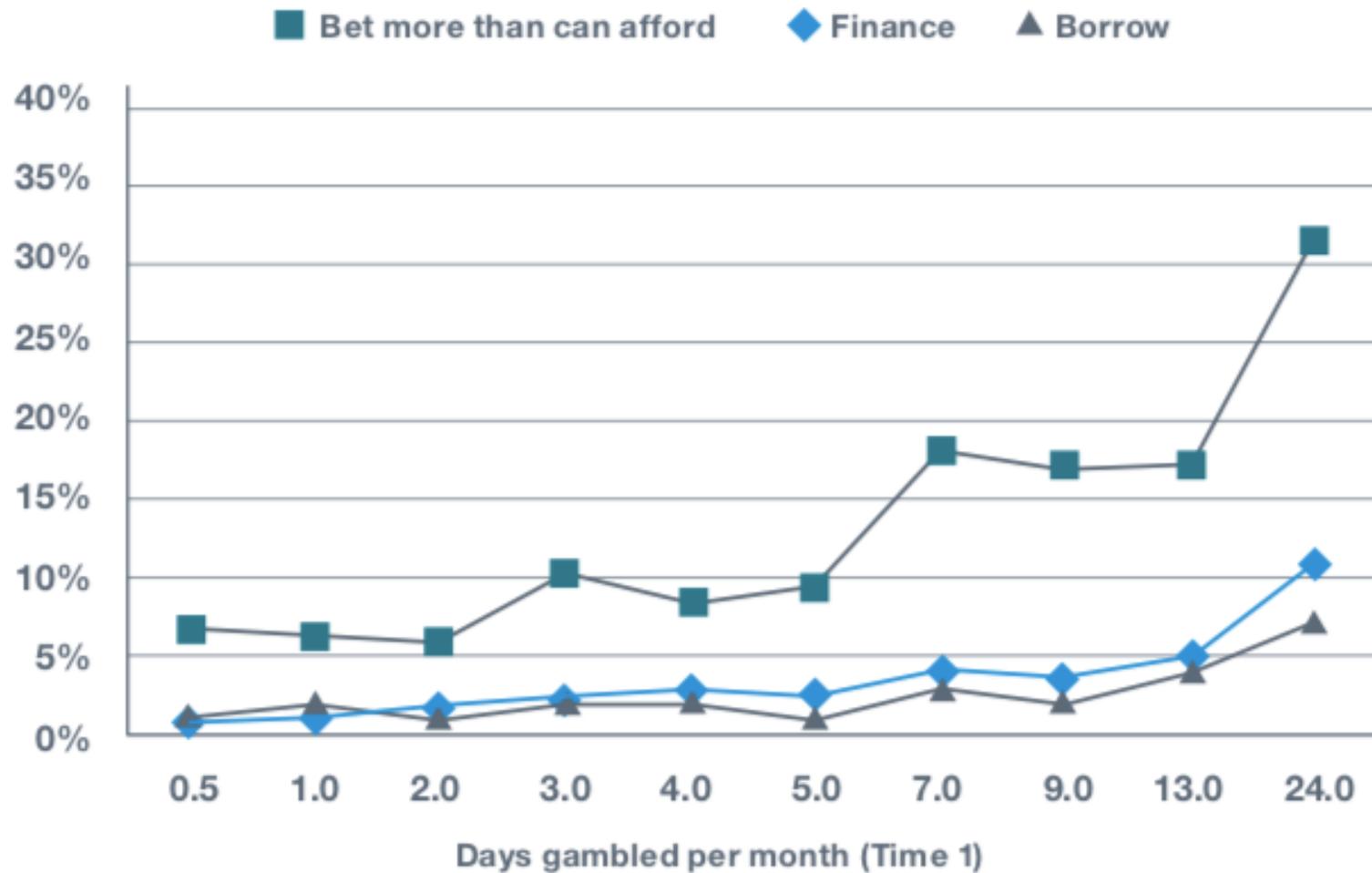
Gambling involves playing a game of chance for money.

If you gamble, the new [Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines](#) show you how to lower the risks and harms associated with gambling. There

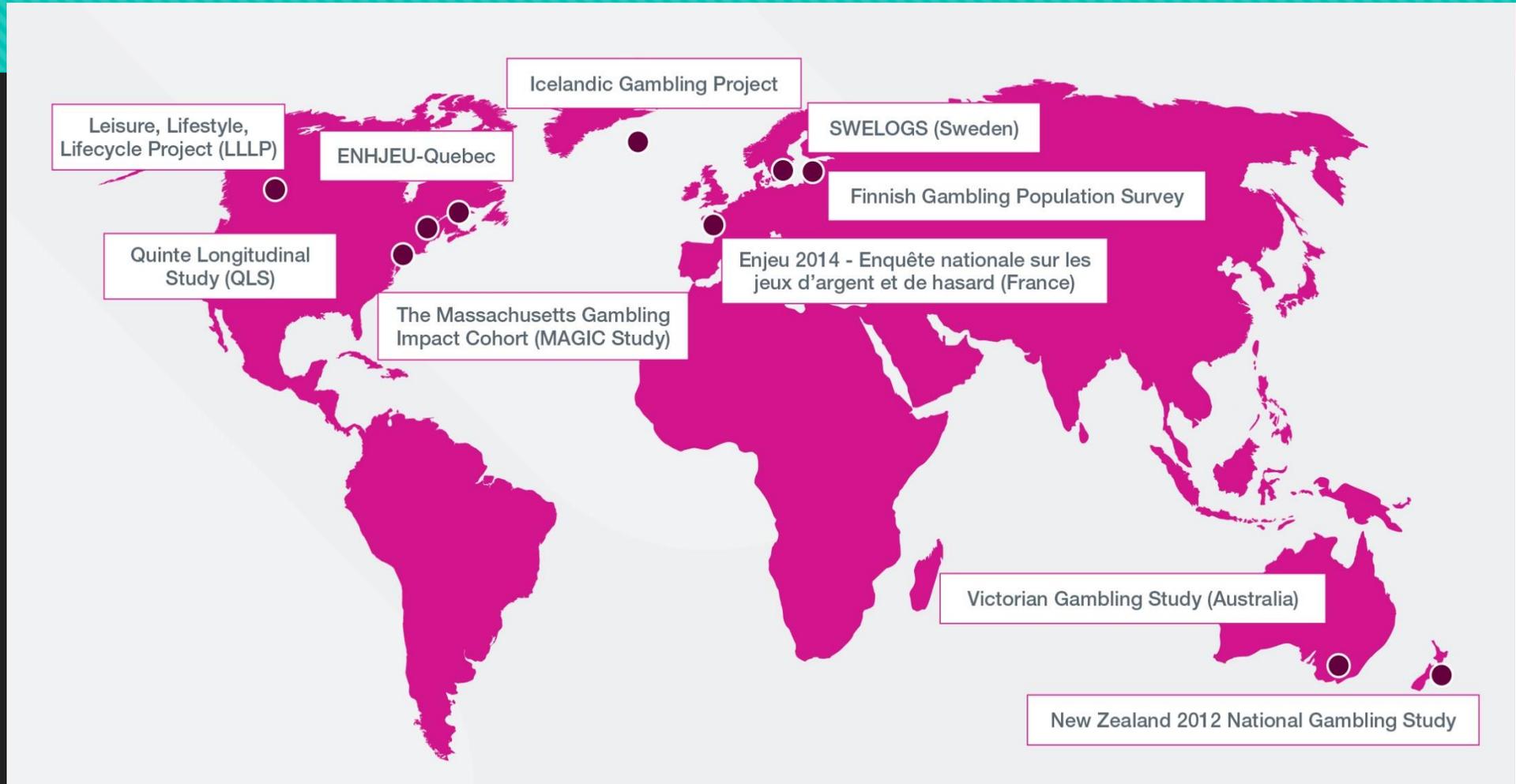


Risk Curve Methodology

Percentage of sample reporting financial harm (Time 2)



Datasets Used to Conduct Risk Curves



Amazingly- there was convergence of results

- The shape of all curves were similar.
- The range of limits were similar.

Example of risk curve

Relationship between amount spent on gambling and likelihood of harm [data source: CCHS 1.2]



Refinement & Validation

- Literature reviews of risk factors for gambling harms
- Consultations with stakeholders
- Focus groups with people who gamble
- Online panel survey of 10,000 people who gamble- full range of engagement.



LRGG

Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines

These guidelines were developed using the most current and highest quality scientific evidence available.

To reduce your risk of experiencing harms from gambling, follow all three of these guidelines:



SAFER GAMBLING TIPS

- Try to **limit your consumption of alcohol, cannabis and other drugs** while gambling. This will make it easier to stick to the guidelines.
- Try to **limit your access to money**. Consider leaving credit and debit cards at home. There are also apps that can prevent your phone from making payments.
- Try to **schedule activities** right after gambling sessions, which can set a limit on the amount of time you have to gamble.
- **Gambling with other people can affect how you gamble**. Think about how having gambling companions or gambling alone might impact you.
- **Entertainment money**. It is important to keep in mind how much money you are able to spend on entertainment when deciding how much to gamble.
- **Set limits**. If you have a big trip or special event coming up where you'll be gambling, plan ahead, remember the guidelines and set limits.



WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES (HARMS) RELATED TO GAMBLING?

Losing money is the gambling harm that first comes to mind. But gambling can lead to other harms:

- Relationship conflicts, such as neglect of relationship, social isolation, arguing with your spouse
- Emotional distress, such as feelings of guilt, loneliness and isolation
- Health problems, such as problematic use of alcohol or other drugs

Following these guidelines can help reduce your risk of gambling harms.

THINK ABOUT YOUR REASONS FOR GAMBLING

Is it for fun? If you're gambling to escape problems, you're more likely to experience harm from gambling and might find it harder to stick to the suggested limits. If you think you are not in control or feel uncomfortable with your gambling, please visit [\[microsite link\]](#) for a list of resources in your region.

Visit www.gambling-guidelines.ca for more information.

These guidelines were developed for people of legal gambling age who want to make more informed choices about their gambling.



IF YOU THINK YOU ARE NOT IN CONTROL OR FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH YOUR GAMBLING, PLEASE VISIT WWW.GAMBLING-GUIDELINES.CA/GETTING-HELP FOR A LIST OF RESOURCES IN YOUR REGION.



LRGG

Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines

These guidelines were developed using the most current and highest quality scientific evidence available.

To reduce your risk of experiencing harms from gambling, follow all three of these guidelines:

1

HOW MUCH

Gamble no more than **1%** of household income before tax per month

Yearly household income	Maximum monthly amount
\$10,000	\$8
\$30,000	\$25
\$50,000	\$42
\$70,000	\$58
\$90,000	\$75
\$110,000	\$92
\$130,000	\$108
\$150,000	\$125

and

4

HOW OFTEN

Gamble no more than **4 days** per month

and

2

HOW MANY

Avoid regularly gambling at more than **2 types** of games

WHAT YOU PLAY MATTERS

- ▶ Fast-paced games that involve quick and repeated betting can more quickly and easily lead to problems.
- ▶ For example, with many forms of online gambling, slot machines, electronic gaming machines and poker, people can spend large amounts of money in a short time.

GAMBLING TYPES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:



HOWEVER, these limits may not be suitable for you. You should consider gambling less than these guidelines recommend or not at all if you ...

▶ Experience problems from **alcohol, cannabis** or **other drug use**

▶ Experience problems with **anxiety** or **depression**

▶ Have a **personal** or **family history** of problems with gambling

SAFER GAMBLING TIPS

- Try to **limit your consumption of alcohol**, cannabis and other drugs while gambling. This will make it easier to stick to the guidelines.
- Try to **limit your access to money**. Consider leaving credit and debit cards at home. There are also apps that can prevent your phone from making payments.
- Try to **schedule activities** right after gambling sessions, which can set a limit on the amount of time you have to gamble.
- **Gambling with other people can affect how you gamble**. Think about how having gambling companions or gambling alone might impact you.
- **Entertainment money**. It is important to keep in mind how much money you are able to spend on entertainment when deciding how much to gamble.
- **Set limits**. If you have a big trip or special event coming up where you'll be gambling, plan ahead, remember the guidelines and set limits.

Visit www.gambling-guidelines.ca
for more information.

WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES (HARMS) RELATED TO GAMBLING?



Losing money is the gambling harm that first comes to mind. But gambling can lead to other harms:

- Relationship conflicts, such as neglect of relationship, social isolation, arguing with your spouse
- Emotional distress, such as feelings of guilt, loneliness and isolation.
- Health problems, such as problematic use of alcohol or other drugs

Following these guidelines can help reduce your risk of gambling harms.

THINK ABOUT YOUR REASONS FOR GAMBLING

Is it for fun? If you're gambling to escape problems, you're more likely to experience harm from gambling and might find it harder to stick to the suggested limits.

If you think you are not in control or feel uncomfortable with your gambling, please visit [\[microsite link\]](#) for a list of resources in your region.

These guidelines were developed for people of legal gambling age who want to make more informed choices about their gambling.



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.

**IF YOU THINK YOU ARE NOT IN CONTROL OR FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH
YOUR GAMBLING, PLEASE VISIT WWW.GAMBLING-GUIDELINES.CA/GETTING-HELP
FOR A LIST OF RESOURCES IN YOUR REGION.**

© Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction 2021.

Impact

- Public health campaigns/gambling awareness
- Gambling Venue campaigns
- Limit setting guidance
- Surveillance surveys
- Clinical outcomes
- Clinical tool/resource



Acknowledgement

Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines Scientific Working Group

Matthew Young, PhD, Principal Investigator,
*Canadian Centre on Substance Use and
Addiction (CCSA) & Carleton University*

Shawn Currie, PhD,
University of Calgary

Magali Dufour, PhD,
Université du Québec à Montréal

Louise Nadeau, PhD,
Université de Montréal

David C. Hodgins, PhD, Principal Investigator,
University of Calgary

Natacha Brunelle, PhD,
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

Marie-Claire Flores-Pajot, MSc,
CCSA

Catherine Paradis, PhD
CCSA

Contact Information

- Email: dhodgins@ucalgary.ca
- For more information: www.gambling-guidelines.ca