

Healthy Living

Warning signs of gambling addiction

Football fans across the globe anxiously anticipate the return of college football and the National Football League. Both college and professional football draw tens of millions of viewers each week, and those viewers are likely familiar with advertisements for the various betting platforms and apps fans can look to as they seek to wager on all the action on the gridiron.

The Supreme Court of the United States declared the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act unconstitutional in 2018. Since that landmark decision, sports betting has been legalized throughout much of the country. Canada also has allowed single-game sports betting since 2021. While many people can bet on sports without becoming addicted, only time will tell if the number of sports fans with gambling addictions increases in the aftermath of the legalization of sports gambling. But a 2025 national survey from

the U.S.-based National Council on Problem Gambling found that nearly 20 million American adults report experiencing at least one problematic gambling behavior “many times” in the past year. Gambling addiction can exact a financial toll, but it also can affect gamblers’ relationships, careers, and family life.

Learning to spot the warning signs of gambling addiction may compel people to seek help. The International Problem Gambling Center notes the following are some of the signs and symptoms of problem gambling.

- Gambling makes home life unhappy
- Experiencing feelings of remorse after gambling
- Preoccupation with gambling
- Borrowing money to gamble
- Gambling to escape worry or trouble
- Changes in sleeping and eating habits
- Losing work time due to gambling. Problem gamblers also may miss work, and students may miss school,

due to gambling.

- Gambling to obtain money to pay debts
- Considering or committing an illegal act to finance gambling
- Celebrating good fortune by gambling
- Thoughts of suicide

There are additional pitfalls that individuals who gamble may want

Human beings are wired for social connection, but millions of people confront isolation every day. Many of those people are seniors who lose contact with loved ones as time goes by. While temporary loneliness can be tolerated, prolonged isolation can be very harmful.

Research by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine found roughly one-quarter of American adults age 65 and older live in isolation. Identifying the early warning signs of isolation may help to prevent the physiological and psychological toll isolation can take.

Here are some signs of social isolation to watch for.

- Withdrawal from events: An

early indicator of social isolation, according to Healthline, is a pattern of canceling plans, not answering phone calls, and withdrawing from established social circles or hobbies.

• Self-care is not prioritized: Another sign of social isolation is personal hygiene and other self-care habits like eating nutritious meals becomes neglected. It can signal that a person’s routine has changed due to a lack of social accountability.

• Home upkeep falters: A person who is withdrawing from social connections may feel it’s no longer necessary to keep a home clean and tidy since they don’t anticipate visitors.

• Irritability and low mood: Persistent iso-

lating behaviors when participating in the NCPG survey. Age and gender also merit consideration. While just 2 percent of individuals 55 and older reported concerning gambling behavior, 15 percent of adults between the ages of 18 and 34 reported such behavior. And the rate of

gambling-related problems was roughly twice as high among men as women. As football season kicks off, sports fans concerned about their own or a loved one’s gambling are urged to seek assistance. Such individuals can seek help at gamblingproblems.org.

lating can trigger a sense of hopelessness. Individuals may become defensive or experience dramatic shifts in mood and sleep patterns, according to Healthline.

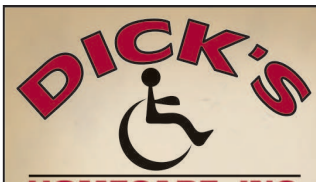
• Reliance on social media or television: Socially isolated individuals may turn to television or non-interactive social media scrolling as a proxy for human interaction, offers HealthDirect.

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What are the warning signs of social isolation?

Social isolation can take its toll on anyone, particularly seniors. Individuals are urged to check in with friends, family or neighbors they suspect may be isolating to provide the companionship and help they may need.



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