

# **ADDICTION**

**Addiction**- When you lose control over a substance or activity.

- Addicts reach a point where they cannot control their own actions. The inability to stop, more than any other attribute, marks addiction.
- Addictions are harmful both to the person with the addiction, and the people around them. Addictions can:
  - \* Ruin health, destroy their relationships with family and friends, wipe out savings, loss of job, lead to increased alcohol/drug use and drive them to commit crimes.
- Symptoms vary from one addiction to another but two aspects that all addictions have in common are:
  - 1) The addictive behavior is counter productive to the individual
  - 2) The behavior is persistent

## **Who can develop addictions?**

- Anyone can - young or old, male or female.
- Family history, personality, living situation, and social factors (family, friends) all seem to play a role

## **Types of Addiction**

- Behavioral and Drug/substance addiction

### **Behavioral Addiction**

- Someone who can't control or stop an activity despite experiencing adverse consequences of the activity

Behavioral addictions are patterns of behavior which follow a cycle similar to that of drug addiction.

## Examples of Addictive Behaviors

**Food & Eating** - Eating disorders, Compulsive overeating

**Exercise** - Chronic loss of perspective on the role of exercise in a full life  
- Can threaten health, cause injuries and physical damage

**Internet/Computer** - Excessive computer use that interferes with daily life  
- Research shows 10-15% of gamers meet this criteria for addiction  
- Heavy game use is defined by the American Medical Association as playing for more than 2 hours a day

And .....

**Gambling** - The act of risking money or something of value on an activity with uncertain outcomes.

It's gambling in Nebraska if:

- 1) You pay to play
- 2) Element of chance
- 3) Prize (playing without a prize is not gambling, it's a game)

## Types of Gamblers

1) **Social/Recreational** - Gambler predetermines what they are willing to lose. Done for entertainment.

2) **Serious Social Gambler**- Considers gambling a serious hobby. Uses spare time to gamble, as often as time allows.

3) **Problem Gambler**- Produces pain and problems to the gambler and family  
Causes emotional, legal, financial and other problems

4) **Pathological Gambler**- Persistent behavior that disrupts personal, family and professional pursuits.  
- Larger amounts of money used, gambles to escape  
- Can lead to lying to family, using drugs/alcohol or committing crimes to finance the gambling

## **5) Youth Gambler - Gambling by young people who are under the legal age**

- **Most youth gamblers learn to gamble from their parents**
- **Youth gamble for various reasons: Seeking excitement, a high, some kind of rush or influenced by advertising/TV**
- **Youth can become pathological gamblers 2-4 times faster than adults.**

## **Signs that Gambling has become a Problem**

- \* **Spending too much time gambling**
- \* **Feeling like gambling is the most exciting thing to do**
- \* **Missing school or not doing homework to gamble**
- \* **Talking excessively or daydreaming about gambling**
- \* **Lying about how much is bet or lost**
- \* **Borrowing or stealing money to gamble**
- \* **Feeling sad or guilty about gambling**