



THE FOUR KEYS TO GAMBLING RESPONSIBLY

What does “responsible gaming” mean to you? Is it setting a limit before you walk into a casino or play a game with friends? Is it making sure to keep the experience fun, instead of one that gets a person into financial, emotional or otherwise in trouble? March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month, a month that highlights the dangers of gambling addiction and brings to light warning signs of irresponsible gambling.

According to the National Center for Responsible Gaming, there are four keys to gambling responsibly. Take a look below and see how you can apply these four principles the next time you decide to play a card game, go to a casino, purchase a lottery ticket or place a bet on a sports match:

Mental illness is a growing problem in America. According to the CDC, by the year 2020, mental illness will be the second leading cause of disability behind heart disease.

1. Responsible gamblers understand that the house holds greater odds of winning than the player.

It's true. The house generally wins, and the games are set up that way. Knowing that the odds are not in your favor helps you stick to your pre-set limits of time and money when gambling.

2. Responsible gaming is conducted in a social setting, with family, friends or colleagues.

Gambling should always be done with friends and family - its the best way to keep you accountable to your limits

3. Responsible gaming is done for limited amounts of time, both in frequency and duration.

If you set a limit of how much time and money you're going to spend while you gamble before you start, it is easier to stick with that plan.

4. Responsible gaming has both predetermined and acceptable limits for losses.

Any gambling activity should be viewed as entertainment, so make sure to set a loss limit that is appropriate for your own budget.

While these are the four keys to gambling responsibly, there are a few more tips in setting your own guidelines. Take a look:

1. The decision to gamble is a personal choice: No one should feel pressure to gamble, or feel that he/she must gamble to be accepted.

2. Gambling is not essential for having fun: Gambling should not be perceived as necessary for having fun and being with friends.

3. What constitutes an acceptable loss needs to be established before starting to gamble:

Any money spent on gambling should be considered the cost of entertainment; people should only gamble with the money they can afford to lose.

4. Borrowing money to gamble should be avoided and discouraged.

5. There are times when people shouldn't gamble: Never gamble when under the legal gambling age; when it interferes with work or family responsibilities; when in recovery for addictive disorders; when the form of gambling is illegal; or when trying to make up for prior gambling losses (i.e. "chasing" losses).

6. There are certain high-risk situations during which gambling should be avoided: When angry or feeling lonely, depressed or under stress; to solve personal or family problems; or to impress others.

7. Excessive use of alcohol when gambling can be risky: Irresponsible alcohol use can affect a person's judgment and interfere with the ability to control gambling and adhere to limits.

If you or someone in your family has a gambling addiction, your Employee & Family Resources EAP offers counseling specifically for it. Click here to log into your EAP portal.

Source: <http://blog.ncrq.org/blog/2014/08/four-keys-gambling-responsibly>



Bet on Health

Most think of gambling as it relates to money – winning or losing, placing bets, coming out ahead, or falling far behind. But what about gambling as it relates to your health and well-being? There are many choices we make each day that will impact our immediate health and our long-term health. Sure, the cigarette you smoke today might not cause cancer tomorrow but what about five or ten years down the road? What if missing your annual exam in 2016 means you find out in 2017 that it's too late to treat a chronic disease? What if the extra drink you had at the bar puts your job or life in jeopardy?

One of the biggest gambles you can make is neglecting to take care of yourself in this very moment. A safe bet to place is to be aware of how you feel, make a daily effort to be a little healthier than you were yesterday, and receive routine checkups with a physician. When it comes to your health, second chances aren't guaranteed.

