

# Not Just a Game of Chance

Many seniors come from a generation where it was uncommon to admit addictive behaviors and seek treatment for them. With age can come more isolation, more free time and changes in body chemistry, all of which can turn a weekend habit into a problem.

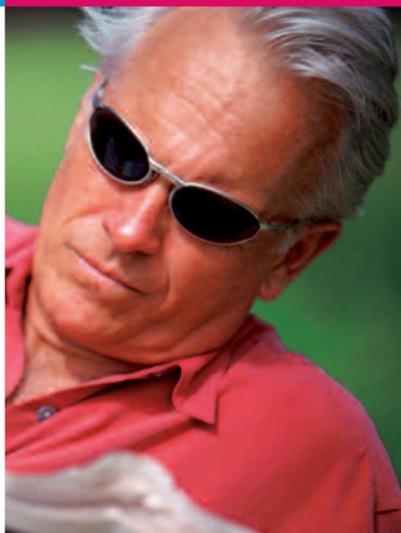
## Reasons Seniors Gamble

- To be socially accepted.
- Many seniors have more disposable income.
- To increase fixed incomes.
- Perception that they deserve to have some fun now.
- Escape from loneliness or boredom.
- To forget the past.
- Physical limitations may not permit past hobbies.
- Lured in by advertising (television, radio, coupons, handouts, etc.).

## Factors that Place Seniors at Increased Risk

- Relocation (selling house, moving to senior housing, etc).
- Depression.
- Stress.
- Loneliness.
- Fear of death.
- Loss of friends/loved ones.
- Strong marketing including "freebies" and prizes.

## Problem Gambling and Seniors



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# Problem Gambling and Seniors

## Warning Signs

- Experience mood swings based on winnings and losses.
- Neglects other responsibilities in order to concentrate on gambling activities.
- Impatient with loved ones if they interrupt gambling activities.
- Eats less or goes without food to gamble.
- Gambles with money designated for necessary expenses such as household supplies, groceries, medication, electricity and telephone.
- Thoughts about cashing in an insurance policy for gambling money.
- Spends retirement funds to gamble.
- Fantasizes about big winnings and winning back all losses.
- Sudden requests to borrow money.
- Change in daily activities /behaviors (e.g., new drinking patterns; changed medication use).



*It is important to note that an individual with gambling problems may not necessarily exhibit all of these behaviors.*

### **New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services**

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