When Is Gambling A Problem?

Gambling is a problem when a person cannot control how much he or she spends. A slot machine in the high roller area may cost from $100 to $500 per pull. It is easy to lose thousands of dollars in five minutes of play. This is more than a typical person can earn in any job or profession. Here are some of the signs that a person needs help:

- Constant or frequent compulsion to risk money or assets beyond the ability to pay.
- Gambling with money allocated for rent or a mortgage payment.
- Suffering great financial stress as a result of gambling.
- Borrowing against the equity of a home or other property to gamble.
- Great optimism about winning which is not based on any practical or statistical evidence.
- Self delusion about the ability to observe winning patterns which will "beat the odds".

Take this quick quiz to determine whether you have a gambling problem.

- Is gambling straining your family relationships?
- Does gambling affect your work attendance or performance?
- Do you have a reputation as a gambler?
- Have you felt remorse after gambling?
- Do you gamble to try to pay debts with your winnings?
- After losing, do you feel the need to gamble again to cover your loses?
- When you win, do you gamble to try to extend your winning streak?
- Do you often gamble until all your money is gone?
- Do you borrow money for gambling?
- Have you ever sold property to finance gambling?
- Do you hesitate to use "gambling money" for regular expenses?
- Do you ever gamble longer than you planned?
- Have you ever done something illegal to finance your gambling?
- Have you ever thought about suicide as a result of gambling?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you should consider counseling.