

Sports Betting From the Front Line: Treating sports betting in clinical practice



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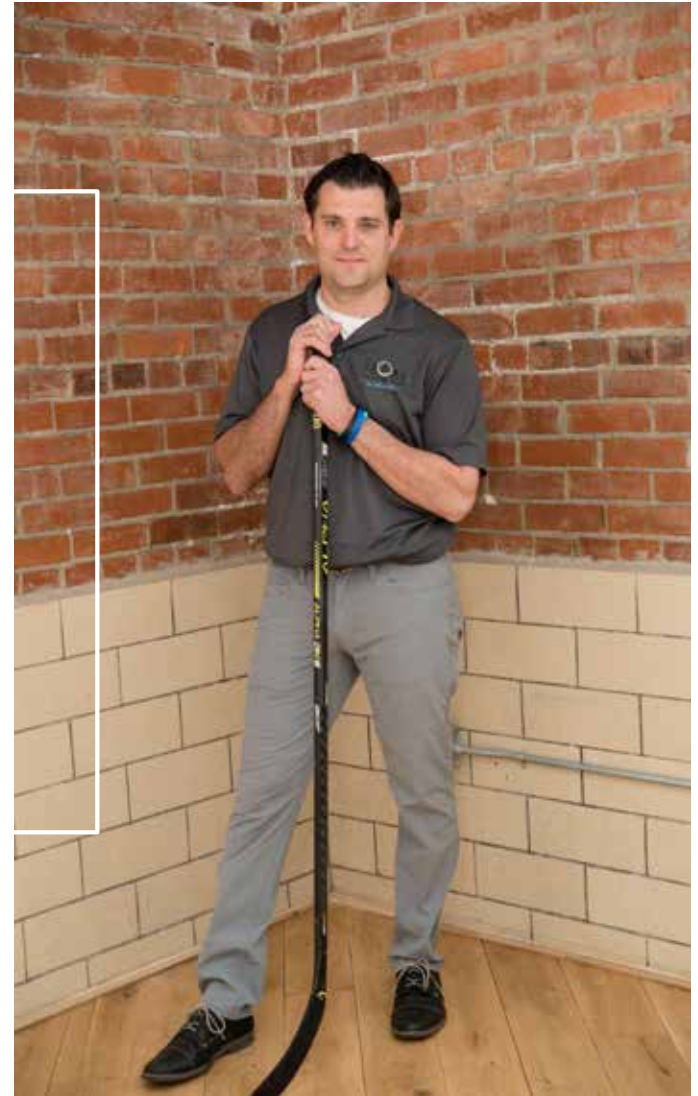
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Objectives



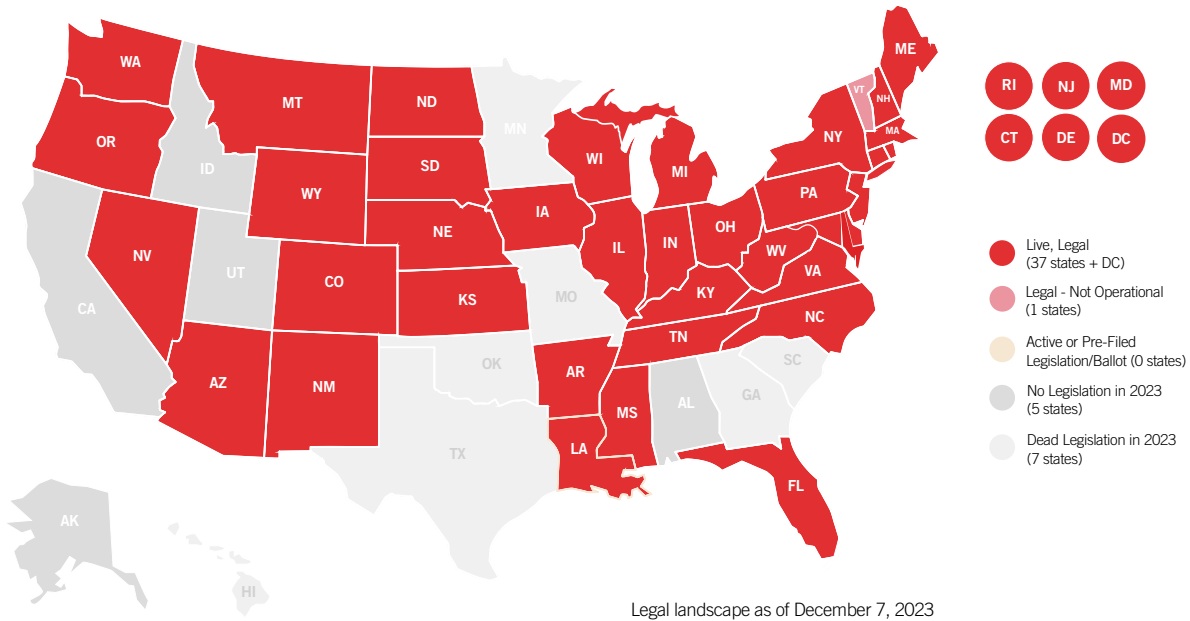
- Review current research on sports betting, athletes, and problem gambling
- Understand the risk factors for athletes and problem gambling
- Learn how to utilize past athletic experience to develop effective gambling treatment plan
- Discuss evidence-informed clinical interventions with most sports bettors during therapy

Athletes & Gambling





U.S. Legal Sports Betting



AmericanGaming.org



Major NFL Suspensions

Ray Rice: Domestic Violence; 2 games

Adrian Peterson: Child Abuse; 6 games

Greg Hardy: Domestic Violence; 10 games reduced to 4 games

Ezekiel Elliott: Domestic Violence; 6 games

Calvin Ridley: Gambling; 17 games



CALVIN RIDLEY  @CalvinRidley1 · Mar 7

I bet 1500 total I don't have a gambling problem

 10.1K

 52.7K

 278.2K

The New York Times, November 21st, 2022

Gambling's Spread

The popularity of sports betting has exploded in recent years in the U.S.



By Eric Lipton

Nov. 21, 2022

Four years ago, betting on live sports was illegal in most of the United States. Now, fans watching games or attending them at stadiums are barraged with advertisements encouraging them to bet on matchups, not just watch as spectators.

This transformation in sports betting started nearly a decade ago, at first with the explosion of wagering on fantasy sports. Then in 2018, the Supreme Court cleared the way for states to legalize wagers on live games. Today, 31 states and Washington, D.C., permit sports gambling either online or in person, and five more states have passed laws that will allow such betting in the future. Professional sports in the U.S. now are part of a multibillion-dollar corporate gambling enterprise.

This shift represents the largest expansion of gambling in United States history. Several of my Times colleagues and I spent months investigating how the industry expanded, and today I want to highlight some of our findings.

Unmet promises

Once sports betting was more broadly legalized, casinos teamed up with sports betting platforms like FanDuel and DraftKings, along with the major professional sports teams, to go state by state to push lawmakers to embrace it. Part of their tool kit for persuasion? Millions of dollars in contributions from the sports betting companies and their allies to those lawmakers' campaigns for office.

- 35 states
- Revenues: fallen short
- Little Oversight
- University involvement
- iGaming

Yahoo! News, February 7th, 2023

THE CONVERSATION

I treat people with gambling disorder – and I'm starting to see more and more young men who are betting on sports

40

Tori Horn, PhD Student in Clinical Psychology, University of Memphis

Tue, February 7, 2023 at 8:35 AM EST · 5 min read

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Many young sports bettors think they're knowledgeable enough to 'beat the system' Nick Lehr/The Conversation via DALL-E 2, CC BY-SA

- A new type of client has emerged
- The apps don't make it easy to set limits
- It's impossible to avoid sports and smartphones

The Conversation, February 9th, 2023

THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigor, journalistic flair



Data from New Jersey is a warning sign for young sports bettors

Published: February 9, 2023 8:34am EST

- Sports betting is tied to poor mental health
- A vulnerable population is being introduced to a lifetime of negative consequences
- Few regulatory measures in place

Problem Gambling & At-Risk Behaviors



Problem Gambling & At-Risk Behaviors



Problem Gambling & At-Risk Behaviors



Amid gambling violations, NFL players debate betting policy

By Stephen Holder **ESPN**

Thursday, August 24, 2023



More Iowa State, Iowa players charged in sports betting investigation

The Rejected Bet That Launched a Gambling Scandal in College Sports

When an obscure youth baseball coach's bet on a college game was turned down by a Cincinnati sportsbook, it set off a frenzy of investigations that has rocked college sports.

By [Jared Diamond](#)



2019 Sports Betting



2024 Sports Betting



-9.5	-110	44.5	o	-110	-455
9.5	-110		u	-110	+340
-2.5	-112	47.0	o	-110	-137
2.5	-109		u	-110	+112
-1.0	-110	43.5	o	-110	-118
1.0	-110		u	-110	-104
-4.5	-110	41.5	o	-110	-220
4.5	-110		u	-110	+175
3.5	-110	41.0	o	-110	+150
-3.5	-110		u	-110	-186
9.5	-110	37.0	o	-110	+340
-9.5	-110		u	-110	-455

An Explosion in Sports Betting Is Driving Gambling Addiction Among College Students



Illustration by Daniel Diosdado for TIME

BY OLIVER STALEY

DECEMBER 12, 2023 7:00 AM EST

Time Magazine

December 2023

- 1 in 10 college students has a GD
- Nearly 60% have bet on sports
- 4% bet daily
- "It's the next Opioid Crisis"

Colorado University (CU) - Example

- 45,000 students
- 4% gamble daily = **1800**
- What if 4% ask for help = **72**
- 1 in 10 has GD = 4500
- 4% = **180**
- Counseling Staff / Workforce Development

12%



Younger and Younger

Where are people, especially underage, finding ways to sports bet?

1. Parents
2. Older Siblings
3. Jrs and Srs at college (the new bookie)

New NCAA Gambling Policy Punishments

The NCAA said that dollar amounts wagered/possible suspensions will stack up like this:

- \$200 or less: sports wagering rules and prevention education.
- \$201-\$500: loss of 10% of a season of eligibility, plus rules and prevention education.
- \$501-\$800: loss of 20% of a season of eligibility, plus rules and prevention education.
- Greater than \$800: loss of 30% of a season of eligibility, plus rules and prevention education.
- For cumulative wagering activities that greatly exceed \$800, NCAA reinstatement staff are directed to consider whether additional loss of eligibility, including permanent ineligibility, are appropriate.

Clients that are athletic/former athletes



- "Athlete" does not just mean elite level athletes
- Individuals that are passionate about sports, interest in watching sports, enjoy competition, past experience in sports of any kind-coaching, youth level
- A generation that grew up with "fantasy sports"-easy transition to sports betting
- Research shows that they are:
 - Mostly male
 - Avg age 26
 - Online sports betting
 - Athletic or heavy interest in sports
 - Disposable income



Why Are Athletes At Risk?



How Athletes Are Wired

Competitive mindset, natural risk takers=push the limits

Perfectionist Tendencies

Master my craft
mentality, don't accept
losing well

Pressure to Perform

Coaches, parents,
teammates, friends

Social media,
comparison game

Injury

Isolation, loss of identity
and structure

Problem Gambling & At-Risk Behaviors





Back in the Game



Goal Setting

Process over outcome

Preparation

Structure
and consistency

Confidence Building

Control your confidence and
avoiding "roller
coaster" confidence, control
what you can control

Self-Talk/Visualization

Internal
dialogue, mental
imagery

Focus/Motivation

Present focus mindset, know
your "why"

Adversity Training

$E+R=O$

Treating Sports Betting

A Clinical Approach



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Time



Boredom can lead to gambling

People gamble when they have too much free time and get bored



Keep busy

Have a plan and schedule activities to avoid boredom and fill time



Find new hobbies

Find some hobbies or activities you enjoy to fill your time



Having a plan to fill your time with enjoyable activities can help you avoid boredom which can trigger gambling urges.

Access to Gambling



Use blocking software

Install software that blocks access to gambling sites and apps



Self-exclusion

Voluntarily exclude yourself from gambling venues and sites



Accountability

Have someone monitor your finances and internet/app usage



Blocking access to gambling through software, self-exclusion programs, and accountability partners can help prevent relapses.

Access to Money



Budgeting

Create a budget to track income and expenses and set limits on spending



Restitution

Set up a plan to pay back debts incurred from gambling



Truelink

Use Truelink card to limit access to cash and track spending



Setting limits on cash access through budgeting, restitution plans, and tools like Truelink cards can help reduce the ability to gamble.

Evidence-based Therapies



Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

Use CBT to change unhealthy gambling thoughts and behaviors



Stress management

Teach techniques like mindfulness and meditation to manage gambling urges



Support groups

Connect with support groups like Gamblers Anonymous (GA) for shared experiences

CBT, stress management, and support groups can provide tools and community to overcome gambling addiction.

Applying Back in the Game Concepts to Treatment



History of athletic involvement

The clinician should ask the client about their history participating in sports such as school teams or recreational leagues. This can provide insights into the client's potential strengths like competitiveness, goal-setting, preparation, and focus that could aid their recovery.



Use sports/coaching techniques

Coach instead of clinician

Take on a coaching role to guide and motivate the client

Use sports metaphors

Reference sports concepts like 'team', 'opponent', and 'mission' to frame treatment

Leverage competitive mindset

Tap into the client's competitive drive in a positive way for treatment goals

Set outcome and process goals

Set concrete outcome goals like abstinence and process goals like making a plan

Focus on preparation

Establish routines for morning and night to prepare for urges and temptation

Rebuild confidence

Overcome shame and guilt, take control of recovery, and rebuild self-confidence

Setting goals

Days abstinent

Attend support group meetings

Implement blocking software

Create a budget



Preparation

The morning and evening routines for gambling disorder patients aim to provide structure and stability.

Establishing daily rituals such as exercise, meditation, and journaling can reduce impulsivity and enforce discipline.



Confidence

Rebuild confidence

Help the client rebuild their confidence and self-esteem through positive reinforcement and focusing on strengths.

Take control

Encourage the client to take control of their recovery by setting goals and plans.

Address shame and guilt

Validate feelings of shame or guilt but reframe them as opportunities for growth and change.

Emphasize progress

Highlight progress and successes, no matter how small, to build the client's confidence.

Self-forgiveness

Guide the client in self-forgiveness exercises to move past shame or guilt.

Self-Talk/Visualization



A word cloud on a black background featuring various terms related to mental recovery. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape. The most prominent words are 'MENTAL-IMAGERY' at the top, 'POSITIVE' on the left, 'RECOVERY' on the right, and 'SELF-AFFIRMATION' at the bottom. Other words include 'MENTAL', 'RECOVERY TRAINING', 'AFFIRMATION', 'RECOVERY', and 'IMAGERY'. The words are in different sizes and orientations, with some appearing vertically and others horizontally.

MENTAL-IMAGERY
POSITIVE
RECOVERY
AFFIRMATION
RECOVERY TRAINING
MENTAL
RECOVERY
IMAGERY
SELF-AFFIRMATION

Focus/Motivation

C-Grids

Use C-grids to evaluate triggers and help clients clarify reasons for change.

Traffic Lights

Use traffic light system to identify gambling triggers and plan responses.

Identify 'Why'

Help client identify internal and external motivations for changing gambling behavior.

Set Goals

Work with client to set clear goals for recovery like abstinence targets.

Boost Confidence

Build client's confidence and self-efficacy to support motivation and commitment.

Adversity Training

Adversity training focuses on planning responses to potential triggers or obstacles to recovery from gambling addiction. This involves identifying high-risk situations and developing coping strategies to avoid relapse.



Sports Betting Comprehensive Treatment Plan



TIME, ACCESS to Gambling, ACCESS to Money

- Athlete Mindset
- Discipline & Competitive
- Structured daily and weekly goals
- Self-Support (team)
- Visualization and Self-Talk
- Adversity

Case

Examples:

ALEX



Your client is a 28 year old, single, male seeking treatment for problem sports betting.

Alex was actively involved in sports throughout his high school and college years, excelling in both individual and team sports. He initially started betting on sports events casually, but over time, it evolved into a problematic pattern that began affecting various aspects of his life.

Alex's inherent competitiveness, honed through years of athletic involvement, played a significant role in his approach to sports betting. The thrill of competition, coupled with the desire to outsmart the odds, intensified his engagement in betting activities.

Case Examples: **ALEX**



Treatment Plan and Clinical Interventions

1. Access to Gambling-blocking software, self-exclusion
2. Access to Money-budgeting, restitution
3. Develop a strong "WHY"
4. Rebuild CONFIDENCE through improved self-talk and a present focused mindset
5. Create STRUCTURE- AM/PM Routines
6. Develop a new TEAM
7. Identify the OPPONENT- use the competitive mindset as an advantage
8. Utilize MENTAL IMAGERY-visualizing a successful recovery

Summary



1. Research is still limited
2. Identify the risk factors of athletes and athletic individuals
3. Utilize past athletic mindset and experience to create treatment plan
4. Review Evaluative Research to inform clinical practice

Questions?





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