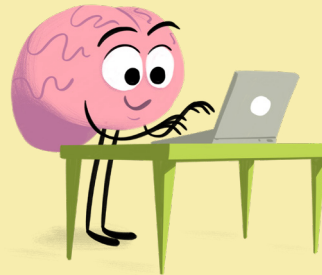




Brain Connections is a series of educational tools designed to share current research about gambling and the brain.



**BRAIN
CONNECTIONS**



Brain Connections is a collaboration between
The City of Hamilton's Alcohol, Drug, & Gambling Services
&
The Peter Boris Centre for Addictions Research



HOW CAN GAMBLING AFFECT MY MOOD?



St. Joseph's
Healthcare  Hamilton



GAMBLING RESEARCH
EXCHANGE ONTARIO
DRIVING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

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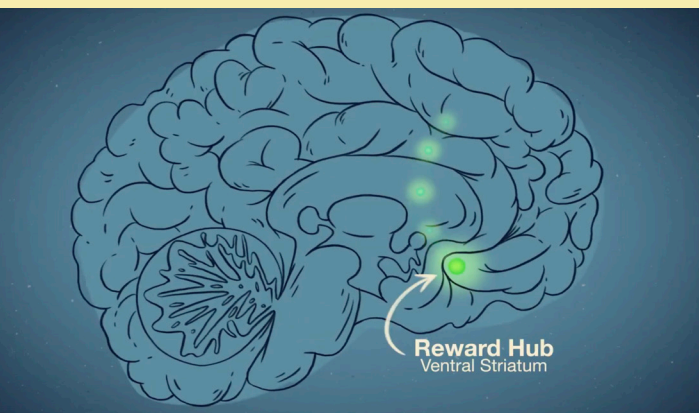
**BRAIN
CONNECTIONS**
UNDERSTANDING ADDICTION AND THE BRAIN

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HOW CAN GAMBLING AFFECT MY MOOD?

Gambling has an impact on your brain and your mood.

Gambling can be fun and exciting. The reward network in your brain 'lights up' when you gamble. This is how you experience pleasure.



At first, gambling can light up the reward network in your brain

However, when gambling becomes a problem, it can lower your mood, even to the point of depression.



Gambling problems can lower your mood

Depression and Problem Gambling

We all have a 'setpoint' for our mood. The mood setpoint is your natural mood state.

Setpoints shift slightly with day-to-day activities.



When you gamble and experience pleasure, your mood setpoint goes up temporarily.



When it's over, your mood returns to its normal setpoint.



When gambling becomes a problem, though, your mood setpoint can go down.

Mood setpoints change when you are under stress. Gambling problems are very stressful because of debts, secrecy and arguments.

When your mood setpoint lowers, activities you usually enjoy don't seem to be fun or exciting.

You might try to gamble more just to feel pleasure. This might not work because your mood setpoint is so low.

GAMBLING EFFECTS ON MOOD



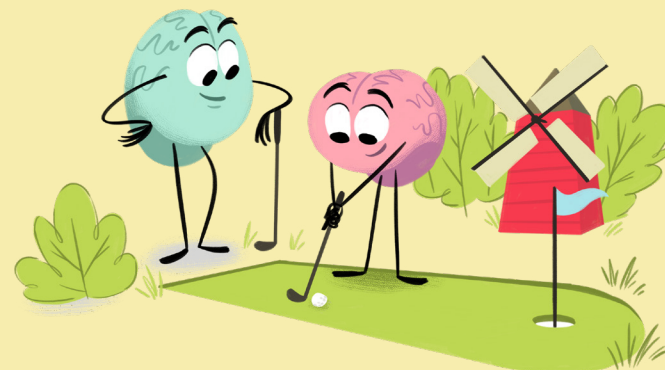
A gambling problem can lead to depression

Changing Setpoints

Your brain is always changing and so can your setpoint.

When you take a break from gambling and give your brain a rest, it can start to respond to other rewards.

Over time, you will start to feel pleasure again from the things you used to enjoy.



Take a break from gambling and you can begin to enjoy other activities

If you are worried about your mood, talk to someone you trust, or get help from a counsellor.

