

Pathological Gambling

Belongs to the group of F63: Habit and impulse disorder

Definition

- Internal compulsion to gamble despite negative consequences
- try to stop often times without success

Epidemiology

- m > w, can happen in any age group
- Often occurs in **conjunction with other psychiatric disorders** (antisocial personality disorder, depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, and substance use disorders)

Etiology

- multifactorial (i.e. genetic, neurochemical abnormalities, environment)

Diagnosis according to the clinical criteria of the DSM V

- need 4 or more over a 12 month period
- Criteria
 - Using increasing amounts of money to gamble
 - **Relying on others for financial support** to maintain habit
 - **Restlessness** or irritability when attempting to stop gambling
 - Constant **preoccupation** with gambling
 - Continuous gambling in an attempt to undo losses ("chasing one's losses")
 - **Jeopardizing relationships** or careers as a result of gambling
 - Numerous **failed attempts to quit** gambling
 - **Lying** to others to conceal the extent of gambling
 - Gambling when feeling helpless, guilty, anxious or depressed

DDx:

- excessive gambling by manic patients (F30.-)
- gambling and betting NOS (Z72.6)
- gambling in dissocial personality disorder (F60.2)

Treatment

- Psychotherapy > Pharmacotherapy
 - **Gamblers Anonymous**
 - CBT
 - Pharmacotherapy is being researched
 - Treat psychiatric conditions (e.g. **bipolar disorder**)

Prognosis:

- 1/3 recover without treatment