

# Psychological treatments reduce problem gambling

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(Medical Xpress)—Early findings from an ongoing major Victorian study indicate that people who have received psychological treatment are spending less time and money gambling.

Monash University is calling for people seeking help for their [gambling](#) problems to participate in a treatment trial.

Chief investigator Professor Shane Thomas said the research, funded by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, aims to understand which psychological treatments for [problem gambling](#) are most effective and how people respond to different treatment approaches.

"We know that some treatments for problem gambling work and we are now learning far more about which treatments works best," Professor Thomas said.

"To date we've found that 77 per cent of the participants gambled less often in a month, 90 per cent spent less time gambling in a month and 84 per cent spent less money gambling in a month, with an average saving of \$100 a day.

"These results are extremely reassuring for people seeking help for their gambling.

"Now we need more people to participate in the study so we can not only determine the most effective psychological treatments but also to match people to the best available treatment for them."

More than 160 participants have already enrolled to receive six sessions of free treatment. Participants randomly receive either behaviour therapy, cognitive-behavioural therapy, motivational interviewing or client-centred therapy.

Participants' gambling [behaviours](#) are monitored over 18 months to determine which aspects of the treatment are most important in reducing gambling behaviours in the short term and, more importantly, in the long term.

The research is being conducted by the Problem Gambling Research and Treatment Centre at Monash University.

CEO of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Mr Serge Sardo, said the ongoing trial will continue to provide valuable insight into effective [treatment options](#) for problem gambling.

"We strongly encourage anyone experiencing problems with gambling to participate in the trial. This will not only help them tackle their problems, it will also contribute to enhanced [treatment](#) services across Victoria," Mr Sardo said.

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Provided by Monash University

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