

Of course it's great when you're on a winner on your favourite machine. But what happens when the luck doesn't go your way? Do you find yourself throwing good money after bad, and end up losing even more?

Sometimes it's all too easy to spend more money than you can really afford. That's when the fun stops – for you, your family and your friends.

If you find yourself gambling more, but enjoying it less – maybe it's time to take control



and make a winning move for yourself.

If you think your gambling may be getting the better of you, here are a couple of things to help get the odds back on your side.

Make it a special occasion – not a habit

Lets face it, there is more to life than just playing the machines. Why not try making it a once or twice a week thing, rather than every day? Instead of playing regularly, make time to enjoy activities with your family, get a couple of things done around the house, get into shape for sport, or do something else you enjoy.

Set yourself limits – and stick to them

Gaming machines are supposed to be fun – and there's nothing wrong with paying for a little enjoyment. But, as with so many things in life, it's overdoing it that can cause harm.

So when you're going to play the pokies next time, decide beforehand how long you're going to play and how much you are prepared to spend.

When you reach either limit – simply call it a day. If you're ahead that's great. If you're down a bit, at least you won't be in too big a hole.

Take a friend

A real friend will tell you if you look like losing the plot – as well as money you can't afford. And you'll do the same for them, right?

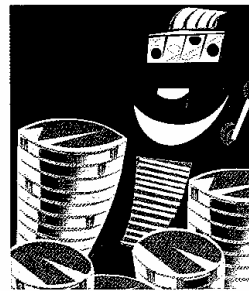
Leave the plastic at home

If you don't have your credit and EFTPOS cards with you, then you won't be tempted to get those extra few bucks if you reach your limit.

Be honest about the odds

In New Zealand hotels and clubs, machines are set to return between 78-92% to players. The win cycle of games is generated randomly.

You might sometimes have a win, but if you keep playing, you'll probably lose all the money you put in. What has happened in previous games makes no difference to the game you're playing.



It doesn't matter if:

- You play a machine straight after someone else has had a big win.
- You play a machine that hasn't had a big payout for a long time.
- You play at certain times of the day or night.
- You play on certain days of the week.
- You press the buttons in a certain way.

What might indicate a gambling problem?

- Waiting for a venue to open and/or being last to leave on closing
- Attending frequently
- Prioritising gambling above family, friends, work, self (hygiene/attire) e.g. leaving children in cars
- Playing for extended periods
- Gambling at a high rate (dollars spent and/or number credits and lines played)
- Having mood swings (from excited to depressed, from happy to angry)
- Behaving isolated
- Being argumentative, irritable or anxious
- Losing stimulation (desensitised to the "thrill" of winning)
- Intoxication
- Making threats of violence
- Incurring debt
- Needing to win
- Chasing losses
- Replaying winnings, rarely quitting while ahead
- Playing recklessly or behaving erratically
- Making repeated money withdrawals
- Having insufficient available funds (transactions declined)
- Begging/borrowing money
- Denying or not realising the problem
- Not listening to reason
- Information provided by friends or family

