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## IMPULSIVITY IN PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING

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**Introduction:** The pathological gambling (PG) is an impulse control disorder with clinical features common to other psychiatric disorders such as addictions and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The pathophysiology of PG is still unclear, but it is hypothesized that it might include environmental factors coupled with a genetic vulnerability and dysfunctions of different neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine, dopamine, glutamate and serotonin. The serotonergic system seems to be primarily involved, as has been shown to regulate the impulsivity and aggression.

**Aims:** With this study we aim to assess the impulsivity in 26 PG as compared with a matched group of healthy controls (HC).

**Methods:** Twenty-six outpatients, with a diagnosis of PG according to DSM-IV criteria, and 26 HC were included in the study. The severity of symptoms was evaluated by the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) and the impulsivity was assessed by Barratt Impulsivity Scale, version 11 (BIS-11).

**Results:** The results showed that the PG patients had a higher BIS-11 total score, as compared with HC, and higher scores of two factors of the same scale: the motor and attentional impulsivity. Even the motor and non-planning impulsivity subscales scores were higher in patients than in HC.

**Conclusions:** These results suggest that PG patients are more impulsive than control subjects. This feature could lead to a loss of control typical of PG.