

A GUIDE FOR

# Asian people to manage addictions and emotional distress



**Asian Family Services**  
*Together enriching lives*



## Acknowledgements

This booklet was developed as part of a research project funded by the Ministry of Health Gambling Innovation Research and Evaluation 2018/19. Thanks are extended to the Health Promotion Agency and to the many people who helped in the development and production of this booklet.

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# What we provide?

**3.4 million New Zealanders gamble;**

among them, one in five gamble weekly or more.

**One in four New Zealand drinkers**

have drunk hazardously which could have hurt themselves or others.

**One in eight New Zealand adults**

smoke on a daily basis.

**Around one in two New Zealanders**

will experience poor mental health at some points in their lives.

Smoking, harmful gambling, alcohol drinking, substance use and mental health issues have caused great concerns within Asian communities in New Zealand. However, many people who have these issues can't see the problem for themselves, and don't deal with them until their problems become quite serious.

Research indicated that harmful gambling is to some extent associated with hazardous drinking, tobacco smoking and substance use. Moreover, research revealed that people who are addicted to these issues are also likely to suffer from emotional distress and mental health issues.

**This guide provides a range of useful information and advice to help Asian people, including:**

- Identifying if they may be experiencing difficulties in managing issues associated with gambling, smoking, alcohol, drugs, and emotional distress;
- Learning some strategies and tools to manage these issues;
- Obtaining available professional support services.

You can also download this guide  
from the Asian Family Services' website:  
[www.asianfamilyservices.nz](http://www.asianfamilyservices.nz)



# Gambling

## Is your gambling harmful?

Tick the box if you have experienced any of the following, either now or in the past:

- trying to win back money you have lost gambling
- hiding your gambling from people who are important to you
- feeling guilty about your gambling
- losing track of time when gambling
- spending more money on gambling than you had planned
- gambling when feeling stressed or lonely
- feeling regret after gambling
- borrowing money to finance gambling
- losing interest in other activities.

If you have one or more ticks above, or you are concerned about your gambling, you can talk to someone in confidence who can support you and help you understand more about your gambling behaviour.

You can call the Asian Helpline on **0800 862 342** for free, confidential and professional counselling and support services in seven Asian languages (Cantonese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Thai and Vietnamese) plus English.

## Tips on preventing harms associated with gambling

- Be honest with yourself
- Be honest with your friends and family
- Track your gambling activities

Describe and record your gambling details, like how many times per week, where, how much cash spent, net profit/loss and whom you gambled with.

Identify and record your main reason for gambling each time you gamble: Did a friend drag you into gambling? You gambled out of boredom or loneliness? Out of drunkenness, or because of too much stress?

### Plan your finances in advance

Set an amount that you can afford to spend on gambling. When gambling, take your set amount in cash and leave bank cards at home to avoid impulsive gambling. Let someone you trust keep and protect your credit and Eftpos cards.

### Engage yourself in pleasurable and healthy activities

List the activities that you like doing or want to do. Keep yourself occupied with the activities listed.

### Keep away from places where you gamble

Under New Zealand law you can exclude yourself from licensed gambling venues, which can be a useful way of breaking gambling habits. You can approach the venue staff for assistance.

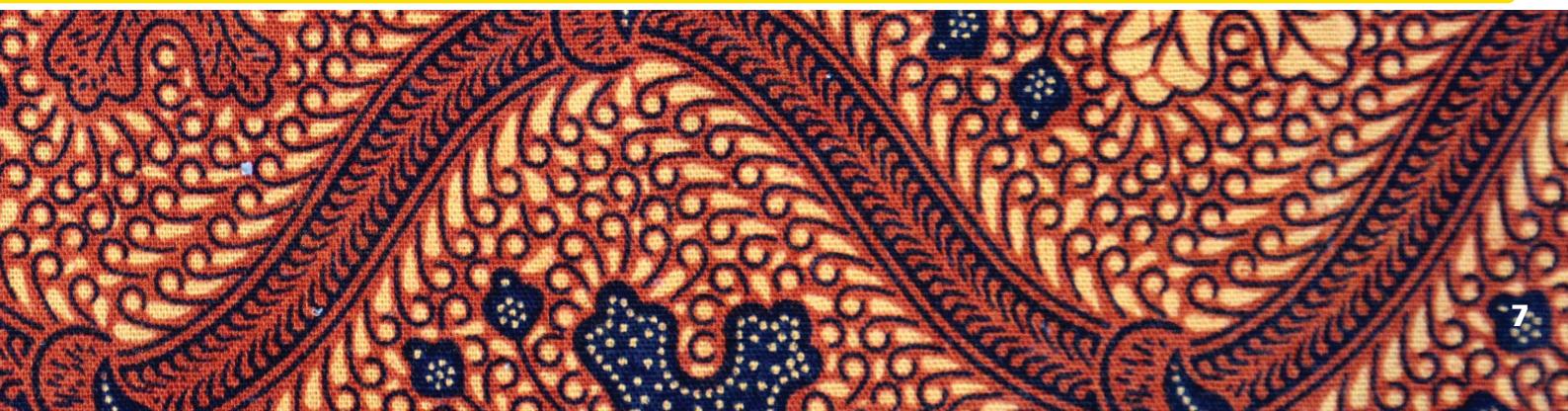
A local counsellor can support you with the self-exclusion process. Call the Asian Helpline on 0800 862 342 for further information.

### Block Internet access to gambling sites

Software programmes like Safe Eyes, Secure Web, and GamBlock can be installed to block certain sites, restrict access times, and block whole categories of sites. There are also programmes that will monitor and report all activities from a computer.

### Get support from others

Family and friends can help and monitor the planning and execution of a non-gambling plan. Engage with a trained counsellor who can walk alongside with you.



## You can help if you are concerned about someone's harmful gambling

### Talk to them

Initiate a conversation with the person as they may feel embarrassed or ashamed, or they may not think they should change.

### Help with financial management

Help them manage their finance and look after their credit and Eftpos cards.

Set up automatic payments for bills and give them only what they need for essentials.

Find a budget adviser if you need help. For example, you can go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for budgeting advice.

### Discourage them from gambling

Under New Zealand law, a venue can exclude a person with a gambling problem, or someone can choose to exclude themselves from a venue or multiple venues. To do this, you need to identify the person to venue staff as having a gambling problem.

The venue operator must then, by law, exclude them from the venue. If a person has been excluded from a venue, they, and the venue operator can be fined if they re-enter the gambling area.

**Help is available for both of you.  
Call 0800 862 342 to ask for professional help.**



**A local counsellor can help support you with the exclusion process.**

**Call the Asian Helpline on **0800 862 342**  
for further information.**

### **Block Internet access to gambling sites**

Software programmes like Safe Eyes, Secure Web, and GamBlock can be installed to block certain sites, restrict access times, and block whole categories of sites.

### **Divert them to other pleasurable and meaningful activities**

Try to guide and divert the person to other activities they enjoy, such as social gatherings, travel or outdoor activities that keep their mind off gambling.

As an affected family member or a friend, if your life has been negatively affected by gambling, you can call the Asian Helpline on **0800 862 342** for professional help.

### **Useful contacts and information**

**ASIAN HELPLINE: 0800 862 342 (Mon– Fri, 9am to 8pm)**

**AUCKLAND OFFICE:** Level 1, 128 Khyber Pass Rd, Grafton, Auckland

**WELLINGTON OFFICE:** Level 3, 5-7 Vivian Street, Wellington

**OFFICE HOURS:** Mon – Fri, 9am-5pm

**WEBSITE:** [www.asianfamilyservices.nz](http://www.asianfamilyservices.nz)

**EMAIL:** [help@asianfamilyservices.nz](mailto:help@asianfamilyservices.nz)

**Asian Family Services counsellors are always ready to help you.**



# Alcohol and Drugs

### Is your alcohol or drug use harmful?

Check whether you are experiencing or have experienced any of the following:

- drink/use more than intended  
(e.g. vomiting or experiencing a hangover following excessive drinking)
- have black outs or lose consciousness
- have cravings for alcohol or other drugs
- have had previous failed attempts to stop or manage alcohol or other drug use
- experience significant changes in mood and/or behaviour
- experience physical sickness or emotional difficulties
- neglect responsibilities  
(e.g. skipping school, missing work, neglecting household chores)
- decreased productivity
- have had accidents or near-misses
- have driven under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- have had financial problems
- experienced deteriorating relationships at work and with family and friends
- have been doing things you normally wouldn't do  
(such as illegal activities like stealing).

While you may not be able to immediately identify a problem with alcohol or other drug use, your pattern of use may be hazardous such that it puts you at risk of developing one or more of these problems in the future. If you are concerned about your alcohol and/or other drug use, you can talk to someone in confidence who can support you and help you understand more about your conditions.

## Tips on preventing harms associated with alcohol and/or other drug use

- Some people drink when they are feeling hungry, angry, lonely or tired. Recognise these feelings when they occur and look for effective ways to manage them.
- When you are feeling stressed, take a deep breath, take a step back and see what options are available for you.
- If your friends are influencing your use, stay away from them and get new friends.
- If you find it hard to control your use, consider seeking professional help.

## You can help if you are concerned about someone's harmful drinking or drug use

You can help a person to re-consider their drinking or drug use. The following are tips for an effective conversation:

- Choose a time and place where the other person is relaxed and not intoxicated.
- It is better to ask a question than to make a statement. In this way you will be less likely to appear critical or judgmental. Tell the person that you are concerned about their alcohol or drug use because you care about them. For example, you can say "You look stressed/unwell, would you like to talk about it? Or can I help with anything?" instead of "you look like you have used drugs again."
- Remember, you cannot fix another person's problem. Sometimes you need to seek professional help. You can be a friend or a 'mate', provide encouragement in supporting them to make positive changes to their lifestyle.
- Your support as a friend may not be welcomed and you may not always feel appreciated.
- You could encourage the other person to contact the agencies listed below for professional support.

Free and confidential services are available.

Alcohol Drug Helpline on **0800 787 797** (24 hours, 7 days a week) or  
Asian Helpline on **0800 862 342** (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm)  
will be able to help you.

## Useful contacts and information

### ALCOHOL DRUG HELPLINE

PHONE: 0800 787 797

WEBSITE: [www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz](http://www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz)

### CARENZ

WEBSITE: [www.carenz.co.nz](http://www.carenz.co.nz)

- **Counties Manukau Community Services**

521 Great South Road, Manukau, Auckland 2025

PHONE: 0800 682 468

EMAIL: [auckland@carenz.co.nz](mailto:auckland@carenz.co.nz)

- **Waikato Community Services**

PHONE: 0800 499 469

EMAIL: [waikato@carenz.co.nz](mailto:waikato@carenz.co.nz)

Satellite services available in Matamata, Putaruru and Tokoroa

- **Wellington Community Services**

Ground Level, 138 The Terrace

PHONE: 0800 385 151

EMAIL: [wellington@carenz.co.nz](mailto:wellington@carenz.co.nz)

- **LOWER HUTT COMMUNITY SERVICES**

40-44 Bloomfield Terrace, Lower Hutt 5010

- **Kapiti Coast Community Services**

Coastlands Shoppingtown, Paraparaumu

### DRUG HELP

0800 METH HELP (0800 6384 4357)

for a meth or P related issue or problem

## Useful contacts and information

FOR AUCKLAND REGION ONLY

### COMMUNITY ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES (CADS)

HOURS: 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri

PHONE: **09 845 1818** (English) **09 442 3232** (Chinese and Korean only)

WEBSITE: [www.cads.org.nz](http://www.cads.org.nz)

### MEDICAL DETOXIFICATION SERVICES FROM CADS

Pitman House, 50 Carrington Rd, Pt Chevalier Auckland 1025

APPOINTMENTS: Mon-Fri 9am-4.30pm

DROP-IN CLINIC: Mon-Fri 10am-1pm (no appointment necessary)

PHONE: **09 845 1818**

### NZ DRUG FOUNDATION (information and advice)

WEBSITE: [www.drugfoundation.org.nz](http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz)



# Smoking

## Is your smoking harmful?

There are more than 5,000 chemical compounds found in cigarette smoke and hundreds of them are harmful to human health. While vaping is less harmful than smoking, it is unlikely to be totally harm free. Scientists are still uncertain of the long-term health risks associated with vaping.

## How to manage your smoking?

### Change routines, practise 4Ds:

**DELAY** – Delay acting on the urge to smoke. Don't open a pack or light a cigarette. After a few minutes, the urge to smoke will pass.

**DEEP BREATH** – Take a long slow breath in, and breathe out slowly again. Repeat three times.

**DRINK WATER** – Sip it slowly, holding it in your mouth a little longer to savour the taste.

**DO SOMETHING ELSE THAT IS ENJOYABLE AND HEALTHY** – Take your mind off smoking by taking action – put on some music, go for a walk, ring a friend and keep your hands busy.

### Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) uses nicotine patches, gum or lozenges to reduce withdrawal symptoms and can double your chances of stopping smoking. They are safe to use, and work by replacing some of the nicotine you usually get from cigarettes or tobacco.

## You can get NRT from the following places:

- Your local stop smoking service
- Quitline, online or by phone
- Via a prescription from your GP or primary health care provider
- A pharmacy
- The supermarket

There will be a \$5 dispensing fee if you access it via Quitline, your GP or pharmacist.

## You can help if you are concerned about someone else's smoking behaviour

Because smoking is addictive it is important to support people who want to quit smoking.

- Remind them you are there to support them.
- Remind them that they are doing it out of love for their loved ones and the environment.
- If you are a smoker, consider quitting with them. Quitting together with family and friends can make the journey a lot easier for both of you.
- Don't nag! Be positive and remind people of the many reasons to not smoke – you will have more money, your taste buds will come alive, you will breathe easier, you'll smell nicer!
- Tell them about stop smoking services that can help.
- Remove things that might prompt smoking (like ashtrays and lighters) and keep cigarette packs out of sight.
- Go to places where no one smokes, like smoke-free parks and sports grounds. It is also good to stay active, as boredom can be a trigger for smoking.
- Remind them of their reasons for quitting.
- Tell them having slip-ups is normal. Stopping smoking is challenging and usually takes several attempts. The important thing is to keep trying.

## Useful contacts and information

**QUITLINE (24/7)**

**PHONE: 0800 778 778**

**TEXT: 4006**

**WEBSITE: [www.quit.org.nz](http://www.quit.org.nz)**

**ASIAN SMOKE-FREE COMMUNITIES**

**PHONE: 09 4151091**

**READY, STEADY, QUIT**

**PHONE: 0800 500 601**

**EMAIL: [info@readysteadyquit.org.nz](mailto:info@readysteadyquit.org.nz)**



# Emotional Distress

## Are you experiencing emotional distress?

Check how well you are doing emotionally, are you:

- Eating too much or too little
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Having low or no energy
- Having unexplained aches and pains, such as constant stomachaches or headaches
- Smoking excessively, drinking, gambling or using drugs, including prescription medications
- Having difficulty readjusting to home or work life
- Pulling away from people and things
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Worrying a lot of the time; feeling guilty but not sure why
- Thinking of hurting or killing yourself or someone else.

Most symptoms are temporary and will resolve within a certain period of time. However, if you have some of these symptoms every day or nearly every day for more than two weeks, it is likely that you are emotionally distressed. If untreated, it may influence your life, and your relationships with families and friends.

## Tips on managing your emotional distress

- Talk to someone you trust about it
- Take a walk
- Get your hands dirty by doing some gardening or engage in arts
- Listen to pleasant music
- Make time to connect with family and friends
- Maintain a balanced diet
- Engage in enjoyable activities
- List out positive self-talk statements

## You can help someone with emotional distress

- Listen to the person. Let the individual know that you care.
- Be accepting and non-judgmental. Help the person determine what the problem might be, without minimising their feelings or judging them.
- Acknowledge the person is hurting and has sought help from you. For example, "I'm glad you told me how you're feeling. I'm willing to listen or help you find professional support who is trained to assist individuals with similar concerns."
- Know your limits as a support person and understand there are professional support services that you can reach out to for information and support for the person. While talking to the individual, you may find that you are unable to provide adequate assistance or do not feel comfortable trying to help someone cope with his or her problems. If this is the case, it is important that you indicate in a gentle but direct manner that professional assistance is free and available.
- Use the professional resources available to you. You can find valuable information online or through mental health organisations.

## Useful contacts and information

Asian Family Services offers telephone and face-to-face counselling services in 7 Asian languages plus English

**ASIAN HELPLINE: 0800 862 342** (nationwide, Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm)

**LIFELINE: 0800 543 354**

**SUICIDE CRISIS HELPLINE: 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)**

12 noon to 12 midnight (This helpline targets those in distress, or those who are concerned about the wellbeing of someone else).

