

# Control Yourself! Inhibiting Physical Action Cuts Risky Gambling and Drinking

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## *TIME:*

Want to gamble smarter, make less risky financial decisions or cut down on your drinking? Practice stopping yourself midway through a simple physical movement, new research suggests.

Although controlling risky impulses may seem unrelated to inhibiting physical movements, research increasingly finds that the brain processes both situations similarly. That means that getting better at one type of choice is associated with improvements in the other. The connection could have important implications for the treatment of all types of addictive behaviors — and perhaps for decision-makers on Wall Street as well.

To examine the association, researchers led by Frederick Verbruggen at the University of Exeter in England conducted three experiments, studying people playing a gambling video game. In the first experiment, 44 people were paid about \$10 an hour to play the game, plus whatever money they won. Participants were given a choice of betting on one of six rising columns, each representing a different sum of money. The greater the potential gain, the lower the odds of winning — so betting on larger amounts was the riskier move, since it could also lead to greater losses. The players had to make their choices within a small window of time, as the bars rose on the screen.

Read the whole story: [TIME](#)