

SPRinG App Study

Letter of Information and Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Introduction

Working with community partners, our research team co-designed the SPRinG app to help people better understand, control, and reduce their gambling. This research study will assess how people use the SPRinG app. Access to the SPRinG app is limited to research participants.

Before agreeing to participate in this study, it is important that you read and understand this research consent form. Taking part in the study is entirely up to you. You may also want to talk about taking part in this study with an advisor, family member, or a close friend. You should not provide consent until you are sure you understand everything in this form.

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Study Funders

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What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to:

- Assess how people use the SPRinG app
- Create a research database with the study data

Who can participate in this study?

In order to take part in this study, you must:

- Reside in Canada
- Be 19 years old or older

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY?

We are asking you to participate in the study by using the SPRinG app.

What is the SPRinG app?

Working with community partners, our research team co-designed the SPRinG app to help people better understand, control, and reduce their gambling. SPRinG app features include:

- Gambling problem self-assessment tools to see where you stand and track your progress
- Urge and gambling journals to identify your triggers and high-risk situations

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- Weekly insights into your urge and gambling patterns to increase awareness and inform decision-making
- Tailored self-management tips to gain greater control and maintain your progress
- Urge distraction and grounding resources to help you deal with challenging situations
- 24/7 connections to crisis lines

What data will be collected?

We will collect data that each participant directly enters into the SPRinG app and aggregate data on SPRinG app usage patterns available through Google Analytics.

Participant Entered Data (Research Data)

After you agree to participate in the research study, you will be asked to complete a brief survey that includes questions about your age, sex/gender, education, race/ethnicity, income, housing status, country of origin, and if applicable to you, immigration/length of residence in Canada. You will also be asked to complete the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), which helps you assess the severity of your gambling problems.

With the Gambling Symptom Assessment Scale (G-SAS) embedded in the SPRinG app, you can record your gambling symptoms. This is a weekly tracking process that allows you to see changes in symptoms over time.

The urge and gambling journals will help you to identify the types of situations in which you tend to experience urges and gamble. The journals allow you to track your urge and gambling experiences, including when they occur, your thoughts and feelings, the type of game and location, wins/losses, whether you were alone or with others, and whether alcohol or drug use was involved.

Google Analytics Data

Google Analytics collects aggregated app usage data, for example, how often the SPRinG app is opened, whether the SPRinG app is deleted and how long users engage with the SPRinG app. These data will allow the research team to assess when and how participants use the SPRinG app.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OR HARMS OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

You will receive a confirmation email when making an account in the SPRinG app. Email will also be used to recover your account if you forget your password. There are common risks of using email to communicate:

- Information travels electronically and is not secure in the way a phone call or regular mail would be.
- If someone sees these emails they may know that you are a participant in this study or see the health-related information included in the email.
- Emails may be read or saved by your workplace or your internet/phone provider (i.e. Rogers, “free internet” providers).
- Copies of an email may continue to exist, even after efforts to delete the email have been made.
- There is always a chance with any unencrypted email, however remote, that it could be intercepted or manipulated.

You may experience a negative reaction or feelings of distress, for example, when responding to some of the survey questions, during self-assessment of gambling severity, or when answering the journal questions. Because the research team will not know your identity, the SPRinG app includes resources on the SOS page to support you if you experience negative reactions or feelings of distress, including tips for dealing with challenging feelings, a contact a friend feature, and 24/7 connections to crisis lines. If you need immediate medical assistance or are in emotional distress, please call 911. Please note: YOU MUST NOT USE EMAIL FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES. If you require immediate help, call your clinic or care provider, or seek emergency services.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

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The tools and resources within the SPRinG app may help you to better understand, manage, and reduce your gambling.

HOW WILL WE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL?

We will make every effort to keep your personal health information private and confidential in accordance with all applicable privacy legislation, including the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) of Ontario. Data security measures reduce but do not eliminate the possibility of a privacy breach of the data entered into the SPRinG app.

Administrative data (e.g., email, account registration) and research data (e.g., journal entries) will be stored and protected in separate databases on a secure server at St. Michael's Hospital. Administrative data will not be accessible to the research team, only to authorized individuals.

Administrative data will be retained on St. Michael's Hospital servers until no longer required to assist with participant account administration or until the SPRinG app is no longer available for use (whichever is later).

Research data will be de-identified (i.e., any information that can directly identify you will be removed or replaced with a code that is not known to the study investigators). Research data will be accessible to our research team for 5 years after the end of the study only for research purposes that the Unity Health Toronto's Research Ethics Board has approved.

During the registration process, you agreed to the Privacy Policy and Terms of Use. You can revoke the decision to agree to the Privacy Policy and Terms of Use by withdrawing from the study.

HOW CAN YOU KNOW THE RESULTS?

The research results may be presented at scientific conferences or in scientific publications. You will never be personally identified in any publication, report, or presentation that may come from the analysis. Results will also be posted at the study website <https://maphealth.ca/problem-gambling-complex/>.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY?

There are no costs to download the SPRinG app. Participants will not be reimbursed for any mobile data charges incurred from use of the SPRinG app.

CAN YOU CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE OR WITHDRAW FROM THE PROGRAM?

You are free to stop your participation in this research at any time by deleting your SPRinG account which can be found in the settings section of the app. Participants who withdraw from the study will no longer be able to use the SPRinG app or access the information they entered into the SPRinG app before withdrawal (e.g., journal entries). Any data collected prior to withdrawal will remain accessible for research related activities approved by Unity Health Toronto's Research Ethics Board (REB).

CAN PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY END EARLY?

Your participation in the study may be stopped without your consent for the following reasons:

- The research team decides to stop the study early
- The Research Ethics Board withdraws permission for data collection to continue

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE DATA COLLECTION ENDS?

You might be able to keep using the SPRinG app after the study ends, though it depends on available funding. Monitor the study website for periodic updates from the SPRinG research team as well as problem gambling resources.

WHO DO YOU CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS?

If at any time during your participation you have questions about the data collection that will take place or need assistance with the SPRinG app, please e-mail springapp@unityhealth.to and toll free number 1-844-781-1516.

REB CONTACT

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Unity Health Toronto Research Ethics Board Office at 416-864-6060 ext. 42557 during business hours (9:00am to 5:00pm). Unity Health Toronto is a health network that includes Providence Healthcare, St. Joseph's Health Centre, and St. Michael's Hospital.

The Unity Health Toronto Research Ethics Board is made up of a group of scientists, medical staff, and individuals from other backgrounds (including law and ethics) as well as members from the community. The Board is established by Unity Health Toronto to review studies for their scientific and ethical merit. The Board pays special attention to the potential risks and benefits to the research participant, as well as the potential benefit to society.

SPrinG: Participant Statement of Consent

I understand the information presented above to me. It describes my involvement in the study, information collected from me and the risk and benefits for my participation. I know that I do not have to take part in this study and can also leave at any time. I will also be able to review and download a copy of this consent form on the study website <https://maphealth.ca/problem-gambling-complex/>. All my questions have been answered.

I confirm that I am over 19 years of age.

I consent to participate in the SPrinG Research study.

- Yes ==>> Continue (to app) [BUTTON]
- No thanks ==>> Return (to login) [BUTTON]