

## TOURETTES – EVERYBODY TICS DIFFERENTLY

### What You Need to Know About Tics



#### True or False - Tics are involuntary movements?

**TRUE**

**Motor tics** are involuntary movements of the body and **Vocal tics** are involuntary utterances from the phonic system.

Tics are sudden, rapid, recurrent, non-rhythmic, and stereotyped.

Tics can occur for a brief period in a child's life but then completely disappear. Sometimes called 'developmental tics' but referred to as **provisional tic disorder** in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) – or they may persist.

When motor or vocal tics, but not both, continue for over one year, this is referred to as a chronic tic disorder.

When motor and vocal tics co-occur for over one year, this indicates Tourette's disorder (more commonly known as Tourette syndrome).

The proposed diagnostic criteria for Tourette syndrome in the DSM-5 are as follows:

- A.** Both multiple motor and one or more vocal tics are present at some time during the illness, although not necessarily concurrently.
- B.** The tics may wax and wane in frequency but have persisted for more than one year since first tic onset.
- C.** The onset is before 18 years of age.
- D.** The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological effect of a substance or a general medical condition.

Common simple motor tics involve the eyes (e.g., eye blinking, eye rolling) face (e.g., nose twitching, grimacing), neck (jerking) and shoulders (shrugging).

Next week's article will delve more deeply into specific types of tics and their impact.

*Valsamma Eapen, Rudi Črnčec, Sarah McPherson and Corina Snedden (2013). Tic Disorders and Learning Disability: Clinical Characteristics, Cognitive Performance and Comorbidity. Australasian Journal of Special Education, 37, pp 162-172 doi:10.1017/jse.2013.2*

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