



THE  
**HOUSSON CENTER**  
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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## Tourette Syndrome

**Tourettes** is a neurological autosomal dominant disorder that involves repetitive movements or unwanted sounds (**tics**) that kids cannot easily control.

### Statistics

- Tics typically show up between ages 2 and 15, with the average being around 6 years of age.
- Symptoms may get worse between the ages of 8 and 12
- Males are more likely to be affected than females

### Tics in Tourette Syndrome

- Tics can involve movement (motor tics) or sounds (vocal tics).
- Tics can vary in type, frequency, and severity and can worsen if one is stressed, sick, anxious, tired, or excited
- Tics can change over time and worsen in the early teenage years and then improve during the transition to adulthood
- Tics can be categorized into “simple tics” (eye blinking) and “complex tics” (repeating movements)

<b>Motor Tics</b>	<b>Vocal Tics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Eye blinking</li> <li>-Head jerking</li> <li>-Shoulder shrugging</li> <li>-Eye darting</li> <li>-Touching or smelling objects</li> <li>-Repeated observed movements</li> <li>-Stepping in a certain pattern</li> <li>-Obscene gesturing</li> <li>-Bending or twisting</li> <li>-Nose twitching</li> <li>-Mouth movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Grunting</li> <li>-Coughing</li> <li>-Throat clearing</li> <li>-Barking</li> <li>-Repeating phrases or words</li> <li>-Using vulgar, obscene, or swear words</li> </ul>

## Risk Factors for Children

\*Roughly 1 in every 20 people with Tourettes have no genetic factor, so there are many other risk factors that can trigger Tourette syndrome. These include:

- Issues with brain chemicals, like neurotransmitters
- Problems during pregnancy
- Low birth weight
- Head injury
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis)

For more information: <https://www.nm.org/conditions-and-care-areas/neurosciences/movement-disorders/tourette-syndrome/causes-and-risk-factors>

## Complications for Adolescents With Tourettes

- Problems in school and with successful learning
- Employment problems
- Possible inability to live independently
- Social isolation
- Stress within the family
- Victimization and being bullied

## Possible Treatment Methods

Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention for Tics (CBIT)	Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS)	Medications	Speech Therapies
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## How Can I Help My Child?

- Have the child get involved in sports, exercise, or hobbies. These are good ways for kids to focus physical and mental energy.
- Help them engage in creative activities
- Find support and support groups
- Contact the child's doctor if any signs or symptoms are noticeable.

## Resources:

- [Pediatric Tourette Syndrome - Conditions and Treatments | Children's National Hospital \(childrensnational.org\)](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tourette.html)
- <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tourette.html>
- [Tourette syndrome - Symptoms and causes - Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/tourette-syndrome/symptoms-causes/uci-20038627)
- [Tics and Tourette syndrome 101 | Texas Children's \(texaschildrens.org\)](https://www.texaschildrens.org/topics/tics-and-tourette-syndrome)
- [Support for Children - Tourette Association of America](https://www.touretteassociation.org/)
- [Tourettes Disorder | Johns Hopkins Medicine](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-disorders/tourette-disorder)
- [Tics and Tourette Syndrome | Boston Children's Hospital \(childrenshospital.org\)](https://www.childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/tourette-syndrome)
- <https://tourette.org/about-tourette/overview/treatment/>

## Extra Helpful Resources (Books)

- *The Whole Brain Child* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen* by Joanna Faber and Julie King
- *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- *No-Drama Discipline; the Whole-Brain Way to Calm the Chaos and Nurture your Child's Developing Mind* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *Breaking Free of Child Anxiety and OCD* by Eli R. Lebowitz, Ph.D.
- *Freeing your Child from Anxiety* by Tamar E. Chansky, Ph.D.

