



## NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

### TIC DISORDERS

#### What it is:

Tic disorders are classified into four categories; Tourette's disorder, persistent (chronic) motor or vocal tic disorder, provisional tic disorder, and other specified and unspecified tic disorders. The types of tic disorders are classified according to hierarchy, with Tourette's syndrome at the highest level having both vocal and motor tics present.

There are two types of tics - motor tics and vocal tics. These rapid movements (motor tics) or uttered sounds (vocal tics) occur suddenly during what is otherwise normal behaviour. Tics can be classified as either simple or complex. Simple motor tics are of a short duration, and may include movements such as eye-blinking, nose-twitching, or shoulder-shrugging. Complex motor tics consist of a series of movements performed for a longer duration, and may include a combination of simple tics performed simultaneously. Simple vocal tics can include sniffing, throat clearing, or grunting. Complex vocal tics can include repeating someone else's words, or saying socially unacceptable words or obscenities.

Tics are often classified as involuntary movements, however individuals may be able to suppress the actions for a time. The suppression, though, results in discomfort that grows until it is relieved by performing the tic. Severe tics may cause impairment in various aspects of the individual's life, complex verbal tics such as saying obscenities, or actions such as repeating another person's gestures or sounds, may lead to the individual being social ostracised.

#### Common symptoms:

1. Motor tics, for example rapid eye-blinking, facial grimacing, imitating someone else's behaviour, head-shaking and shoulder-shrugging at the same time
2. Vocal tics, for example repetitive throat clearing, sniffing, saying socially inappropriate things such as swear words, repeating the words or phrases of others
3. The tics have been present to varying degrees for a period of more than 1 year
4. The onset of the tics was before the age of 18 years



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### **Causes:**

Anxiety, exhaustion and excitement have been found to make tics worse. Complications during birth, older parental age, maternal smoking and lower birth weight have been identified as potential risk factors for the development of tic disorders.