



Tourette Syndrome

Description

French neurologist Dr George Gilles de la Tourette first reported the syndrome in the medical literature in 1885. The symptoms of Tourette Syndrome (TS) are **tics**. Tics are repeated, chronic and involuntary movements and sounds. Someone with TS may be able to suppress them for a while but eventually they have to release the tics. The symptoms often decrease towards the end of adolescence. Coprolalia, the involuntary utterance of obscenities, affects only 10%-15% of people with TS.

Strategies

- Prevent teasing at all costs.
- Allow extra time to prevent stress.
- Provide time out when tics become disruptive.
- Have a discreet sign so the pupil can leave to release tics in private.
- Encourage the student to monitor himself so he knows when he needs a break.
- Allow him to sit at the back to prevent staring.
- Be aware that reading can be affected by eye/neck tics.
- If loud, vocal tics are a problem allow him to miss large, quiet times such as assembly.
- Make use of a computer to cut down on handwriting.
- Use multi-sensory strategies, especially practical activities.
- Pair with a mentor — especially if the tics would make an activity unsafe, such as science experiment.
- Be watchful for depression.
- Do **not** punish a tic!

Further information

Tourette Syndrome (UK) Association, <http://www.tsa.org.uk/>.