

# Tourette's Syndrome

## What is Tourette's syndrome and where to find help and support?

Tourette Syndrome (TS) is an inherited neurological condition. It affects one school child in every hundred and is more common amongst boys. Over 300,000 children and adults are living with TS in the UK. TS is often misunderstood as a condition which makes people swear, or say socially inappropriate things. Although it is true that 'coprolalia' – the clinical term for involuntary swearing – is a symptom of TS, it only affects a minority of people. 90% of people with TS **do not** have coprolalia. Tics usually start in childhood around the age of six to seven years and tic symptoms often fluctuate in severity and frequency. Although the nature of tics is that they come and go, such patterns are also influenced by environmental factors including stress, excitement and relaxation.

Tics can occur in nearly any part of the body and in any muscle; some individuals report of 'internal tics' such as deep abdominal muscle tension and 'stomach tics'. Tics can be divided into Simple and Complex categories. There is more useful information about Tics here:

[Symptoms of TS \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk).

## How do I know if my child has Tourette's syndrome?

The key features are tics – involuntary sounds and movements, which must be present for at least 12 months to meet the diagnostic criteria. Up to 85% of people with TS will also experience co-occurring conditions and features which might include Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and Anxiety.

Tourette Syndrome is on the spectrum of conditions known as Tic Disorders. Other conditions on this spectrum include: Transient tic disorder or provision tic disorder; chronic tic disorder; Tourette Syndrome; Tic disorder not specified.

It important to remember that lots of people have Tourette's and it hasn't held them back , including Billie Eilish, David Beckham and Dan Akroyd. There is help and support that can make things much easier for your child.

## Who can help?

- Start with your child's teacher or SENCo and tell them what is worrying you. They can check a number of things to see if they can work out what your child finds difficult. They can help you to keep a diary to see what areas of difficulty your child has and what changes might help them.
- You can find more help and information at the national Tourette's Syndrome website Tourette's Action [Tourettes Action \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk).
- The best thing you can do is to talk to the professionals and work together to help your child learn and develop.

Where to find out more on website:

[www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk](http://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk) and look under Useful Information