

HOT TOPICS – JUNE 2023

TOURETTE SYNDROME AWARENESS

Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month is observed every year from May 15 to June 15 and Tourette's Awareness Day is on 7 June.

You may have heard of Tourette Syndrome (TS), but how much do you know about the condition? Tourette's Action, the leading support and research charity for

What is Tourette's

people with Tourette Syndrome and their families explains:

"Tourette Syndrome is an inherited, neurological condition, the key features of which are tics, involuntary and uncontrollable sounds and movements. TS is a complex condition and a large number of people with the condition will also experience co-occurring features and conditions" [Source: [Find out about TS \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)]

There are many misconceptions regarding TS, and many people believe that it is a swearing condition that is behavioural. The clinical term for involuntary swearing is 'coprolalia' and although this may be a symptom of TS, it does not actually affect everybody.

Most people with TS will experience co-occurring conditions such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and anxiety.

What are the main features of TS? 'The key features of Tourette Syndrome (TS) are **tics**; both repeated movements (motor tics) and sounds (vocal tics) both which are involuntary' [Source: [Tourettes Action \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)]

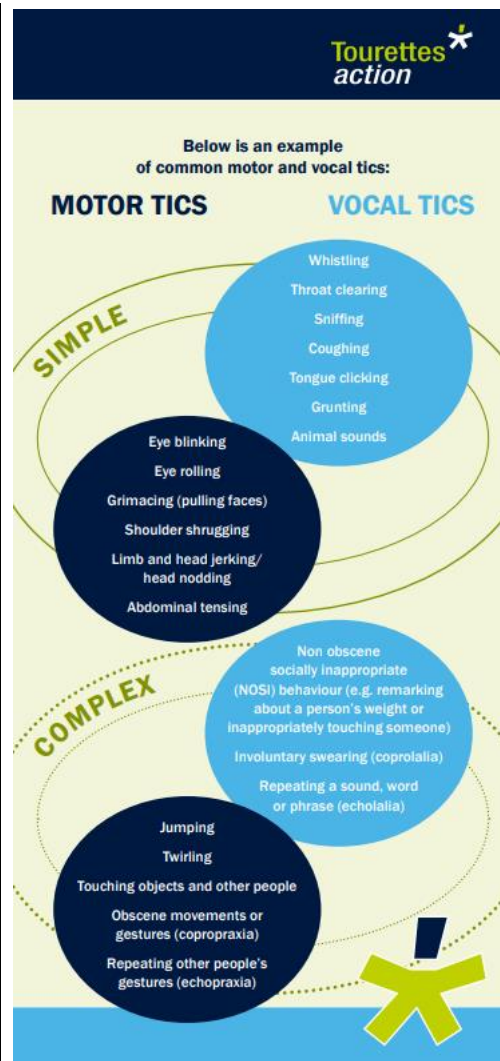
Tourette's affects 1 in 100 school aged children, so it is more common than many of us realise

Below are some terms that you may not have encountered previously, which are related to TS, and their meanings:

- 'Palilalia' – repetition of the person's own words or phrases
- 'Palipraxia' – repetition of the person's own movements
- 'Echolalia' – involuntary repetition/imitation of another person's spoken words
- 'Echopraxia' – involuntary repetition/imitation of another person's movements

Tourette Syndrome is named after Gilles De la Tourette, who was a French neurologist from 1885!!

DID YOU KNOW?



The graphic on the left shows some of the common motor and vocal tics that you may encounter. This may help you to better understand the responses that you receive from someone that has TS [Source: [1507634515 TA-What-Makes-Us-Tic-Brochure-2017.pdf \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)]

If you require any support regarding TS, you can contact Tourette's Action on 0300 777 8427.

Additionally, they have support groups that can be accessed [here](#), a helpdesk that can be accessed [here](#) or you may wish to read through their FAQs [here](#). Tourette's Action also has an informative e-Learning module that you can complete to develop and improve your understanding of TS. You can access the e-learning module [here](#). Finally, consider the points below from the perspective of a police officer and discuss with your PDC.

TS is a disability and therefore people are protected under the Equality Act 2010 from being discriminated against because of their condition. How might this impact upon your role as a police officer?

What can you do to make someone with TS feel accepted and understood? Think about our British Values and in particular, 'respect and tolerance'

DISCUSSION POINTS

What misconceptions exist about TS and how can you influence positive changes in attitude toward those with TS?

Tics can be triggered, or increased, by environmental factors such as stress or excitement. What could you do to reduce those triggers?