## What is Tourette Syndrome (TS)?

TS is a disorder of the nervous system that normally develops in childhood. TS causes a person to make quick, repeated movements and sounds that they cannot control; not always at the same time. These movements or sounds are called tics, which occur several times a day, nearly every day.

TS occurs in people from all ethnic groups; males are affected 3 to 4 times more than females. Although TS symptoms last a lifetime, most people have their worst tic symptoms in their early teens. Then there is improvement in the late teens and continuing into adulthood.

What does it mean to have TS?

There are two types of tics: **motor** (movements of the body) and **vocal** (words or noises). These tics can be either simple or complex:

**Simple motor tics** are repeated movements involving limited muscle groups. Examples:

* eye blinking
* facial frowns
* shoulder shrugging
* nose scrunching
* touching
* spitting
* finger tapping
* clapping
* head or body jerking

Reference: NIH, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Tourette Syndrome Fact Sheet. Retrieved on June 25, 2019
<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Fact-Sheets/Tourette-Syndrome-Fact-Sheet>

**Complex motor tics** are repeated movements involving several muscle groups. Examples – a combination of:

* facial frowning along with a head twist and a shoulder shrug
* sniffing or touching objects
* hopping
* jumping
* obscene gesturing
* bending or twisting

**Simple vocal tics** might include repeated throat-clearing, humming, sniffing/snorting, tongue clicking, grunting or barking.

**Complex vocal tics** include repeating one’s own words or phrases, repeating others words or phrases, or saying inappropriate words.

Are there other problems from TS?

Yes. People with TS may have additional problems such as poor impulse control, problems with reading, writing, and math, and other mental health conditions.

How can I help myself if I have TS?

In Job Corps, our goal of treatment for TS is to help you understand and manage your condition so you can move toward finding employment. It may include cognitive behavioral therapy, medication, and

participation in groups and activities.

* Talk to your counselor or health and wellness staff
* Request reasonable accommodations, if needed
* Attend a support group
* Keep good sleep practices
* Maintain good eating habits
* Engage in physical activity
* Know your stressors and learn stress-relief activities
* Stay on medication, if prescribed and alert the health and wellness staff if side effects occur
* Ask for center mental health services

I know someone who might have TS. What can I do?

* Encourage the person to ask for help from a counselor, Residential Advisor, or health and wellness staff
* Encourage the person to do some research online
* If they are in distress get help immediately
* Do not leave the person alone
* Let the nearest Job Corps staff member know NOW!
* If not able to find a staff member, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room
* Access the Job Corps Safety Hotline (844-JC1-SAFE) via text, email, phone, mobile app or web site