

## Focus on... Seeing a specialist

## Section no.1 Dealing with TS

You may be seeing a specialist for the first time, you may have known one for some time or you may have had a series of specialists. In each case the most important information you can give them is an accurate history of you or your child's condition.

If you are seeing a new doctor they may not have the previous notes. They will appreciate detailed information about dates things happened, which doctors have been involved in the past and which drugs have been taken and at what doses! When you see a specialist always have a record of the current medications, including all doses (not just the numbers of tablets being taken). They may not have this information to hand even if you think they should already know. If you don't know what the dose is then taking the packets of medication with you for the doctor to see can be very helpful.

If you are an adult patient and the diagnosis is not yet established it is always very helpful to take one of your parents along with you to the consultation if possible. They may be able to help you with questions about if you had tics as a child and at what age, etc.

We recommend you write these things down and start to keep a record. You could also record the past history as much as possible. You will often be sent copies of the doctor's reports and these can also be filed away in your Practical Guide.

Some questions you may be asked during a medical assessment for Tourette Syndrome

### 1) About the tics

- When did they start?
- What started first?
- What age were they most severe?
- Are they very noticeable to other people?
- Can they be suppressed?
- Does suppressing them eventually make them worse?
- Do they change over time and fluctuate in severity?
- Have you ever had the swearing tic or made rude gestures as a habit (only affect about 10% of people)?
- Do you copy what people say or do?
- If medications have already been used, what were they and what effect did they have?

### 2) About other features of Tourette Syndrome (do not affect every patient)

- Do you or your child have OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder) or obsessions, rituals or unpleasant intrusive thoughts?
- Do you like counting in your head?
- Were you or your child diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)?

### 3) About your family

- Do any other relatives have motor or vocal tics or both (including extended family)?
- Do you know if any relatives have OCD or ADHD?
- Have any family members had other neurological conditions or mental illnesses?

### 4) About the medical history

- Any other medical conditions in the past (include operations)?
- Have you ever suffered from depression or other mental illnesses?
- Do you take any regular medications now (need drug names and doses, include contraceptive pill, if appropriate)?
- For adults - history of smoking, drinking alcohol and taking illegal drugs.
- Have there been a lot of throat infections or streptococcal (a kind of bacteria) infections?

### 5) About you or your child's development

- Were the pregnancy and delivery normal or were there any problems?
- Did walking and talking develop at the normal time?
- How did you/your child do at school?

## Record of treatment

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Hospital:	
Doctor (consultant):	
Drugs and doses:	
Duration drug taken for:	
Beneficial or side effects of drugs given:	
Any other drugs at the same time?:	

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