

Tic Awareness and Management

For both individuals with tics and their support persons:

- To the best of your ability, try to save most tic-related talk for times when tics are calm. It can help to have planned or set times to talk about tics.
- Consider telling others about your tics so they understand. This can include asking them to try their best to ignore the tics when they happen.

For support persons:

- Either ignore your loved ones' tics or provide limited neutral attention to the tics. (In instances when tics must be attended to for safety reasons, try to give the tics only the least amount of attention necessary).
 - Consider sharing this strategy with other trusted persons (e.g., teachers, bosses, classmates, co-workers, etc.) who regularly interact with your loved one.
- Ignore the tics, not the person. If you have a pattern of interacting around tics, try changing the focus of your interactions. For example, if you make jokes together about tics, try telling each other jokes about other topics. If you tend to ask about how tics were during their day, try to instead ask about something interesting, fun, or challenging that happened that day.
- Resist expressing frustrations about your loved ones' tics in front of them.
- Try to create a supportive environment so that your loved one is able to talk to you about their tics whenever they would like to. If they initiate a conversation about tics, then it is okay to talk about tics and how they are feeling.

Strategies for Task Completion

For both individuals with tics and their support persons:

- Try not to change expectations and responsibilities simply because of tics. If tics get in the way, try adapting the activity or task to make it more manageable. For example, try taking time-limited breaks and then returning to the activity, breaking down tasks into more manageable chunks, using diaphragmatic breathing techniques, etc.
- To the best of your ability, try to stick to doing activities that you enjoy or that you have to do even if your tics happen. Try to resist avoiding activities because of tics.
- A therapist can help you figure out ways to adjust tasks or activities to make them more manageable.

General Recommendations

In general, experts recommend that people with tics:

- Follow a bedtime routine
- Exercise regularly
- Eat healthy foods at consistent times
- Limit electronics, especially screen time in the 1 hour before bedtime



Tic Basics: Supporting Your Child



Examples of More Strategies

Natural Responses to Tics	Recommended Strategies
Laughing at tics that you and your loved one find funny	Acting as if the tic did not occur or, after they have learned their tic blocking skills, gently reminding them to practice their tic blocker
Asking your loved one immediately after they get home from school/work, "Did you have any tics today?"	Asking your loved one about how their day went
Allowing your loved one to avoid doing the dishes and other chores because you notice their tics are happening quite often	Gently reviewing with your loved one the strategies they can use to help them manage their tics and help them come up with a plan that will make completing their chores/responsibilities more manageable
Comforting your loved one when you see them tic and you notice they are frustrated about their tics	Briefly validate your loved one's frustration and gently remind them to use their tic blocker; wait until some time has passed before asking them if they are OK
Excusing your child from homework hour after you notice several tics	Encourage your child to practice their tic blocker, take a short break if necessary, then encourage them to complete their homework.

Additional Resources

Please note that this represents an update of what is included in Chapters 1-2 in the [Managing Tourette Syndrome: A Behavioral Intervention Workbook, Parent Workbook](#) by Dr. Doug Woods and several other tic experts. Additional information comes from the [Tourette Association of America](#) website.

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