



Cure&Care



Workbook for Children

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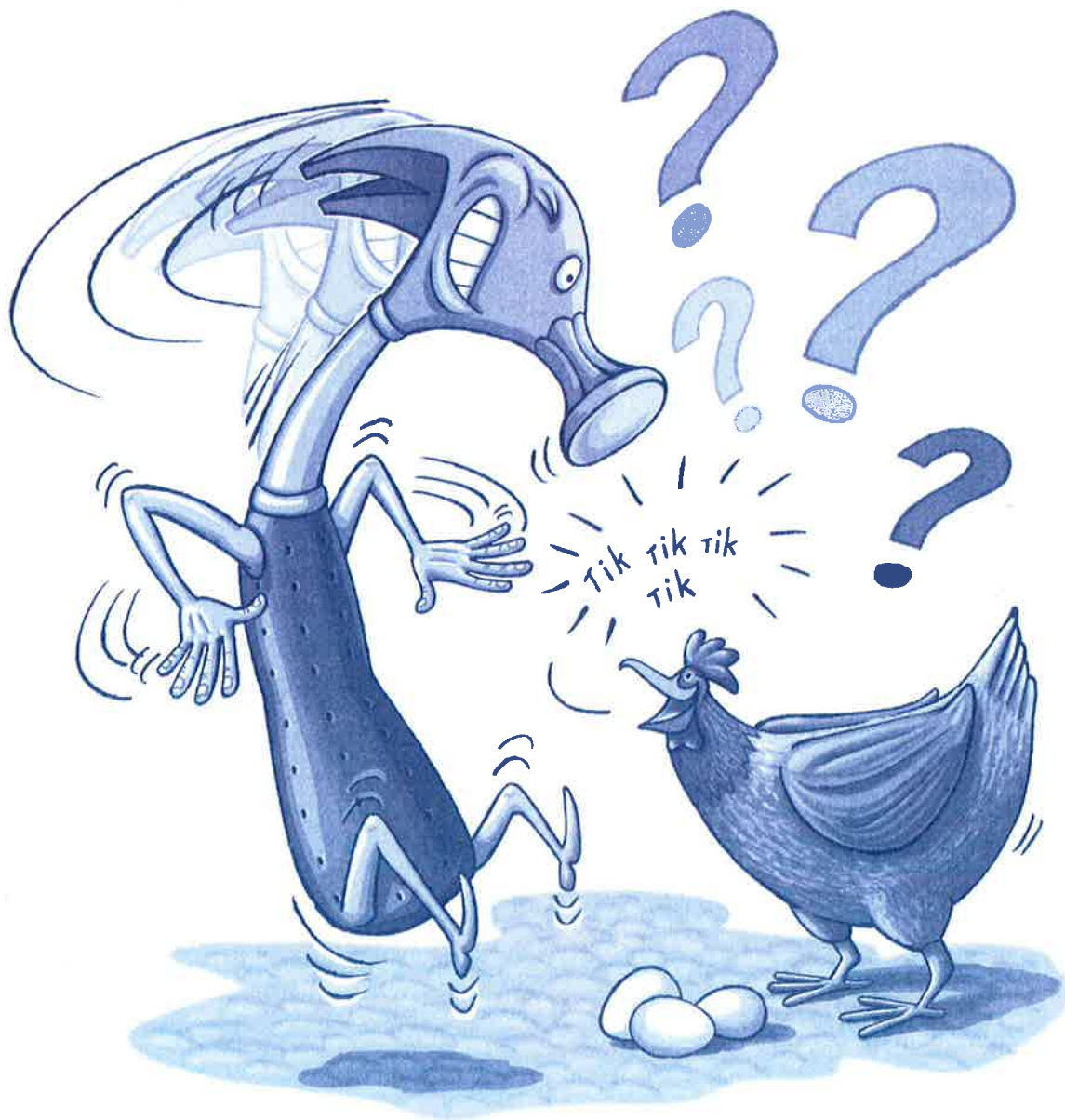
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1 Information about tics



1 Information about tics

1.1 What are tics?

Lots of kids have tics. Do you know what a tic is? Tics are movements or sounds that you make, that you do not really want to make. The movements or sounds are often short and abrupt. Examples of movements are squinting with your eyes, making a funny face and shaking your head. Coughing, growling or shouting words are examples of sounds. There are many more possible examples. The movements are also called motor tics or movement tics. The sounds are called vocal tics or sound tics. In this workbook we will use the words movement tics and sound tics. Tics can also be more complicated, for example jumping or touching things. There are also tics that you cannot see or hear, but that are in your head. We call these cognitive tics, or thought tics. Thought tics are often mind games like counting words, counting lampposts or reading backwards.

What tics do you have? Are they movement tics or sound tics? Do you have thought tics too? Make a list of all the tics you have. Ask your parents to help because sometimes children have tics they do not notice themselves.

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1.2 Tic-alert!

Sometimes children can sense a tic coming on because they feel something happening in their body in the place where they will do the tic. A difficult word for this feeling is "premonitory sensation". This feeling is also called a tic-alert because your body is giving you a signal that a tic is coming. Most kids do not like tic-alerts. They also find it hard to describe what a tic-alert feels like; it is a very special feeling! Some children compare it to a pressure, tickle, energy or tension. Other children say that it feels like there are little bugs crawling over their body or tiny little bombs that are exploding inside of you. After the tic has been expressed, the tic-alert is usually quiet, at least for some time. What makes it hard is that the tic-alert keeps on coming back so you have to do a tic again to make it go away. That means you have to keep on making sounds or movements you do not want to make.

Can you feel a tic coming on? What tic-alert do you feel in your body before you do a tic? Does it remind of you of something? Try to describe what you feel. Maybe you cannot say it with words, but you can make a drawing instead!

Do not worry if you are having trouble here and do not know what to write down. Later on in this workbook we are going to help you to find out if your tics are announced by tic-alerts.

1.3 What is a tic disorder?

Some children have many different tics and other children only have one. Some children do tics all day long and some only now and then. Everything is possible. Some children have tics that just disappear and never come back. If tics do not go away or come back after they have gone away, it may be a tic disorder. A well-known tic disorder is called the Gilles de la Tourette syndrome (Tourette's syndrome). People that have this syndrome have had different movement tics and at least one sound tic for more than one year. During that year the tics have not disappeared for longer than three months in a row. Scientists have found out that between 0.5 and 1 percent of all people has Tourette's syndrome. This means that in a group of one hundred people, there is usually one person that has the syndrome.

Not everyone can get the syndrome, it is something that you can be born with. So by nature you are more likely to get the syndrome or not. More boys than girls get the syndrome.

Another tic disorder is chronic tic disorder. This means that you have either movement tics or sound tics, but not both as in Tourette's syndrome. Finally, there is also something called a temporary tic disorder. It's in the name; the tics are temporary and disappear within a year. About half of the children with tics have fewer tics as they grow older and sometimes tics disappear completely even if they have Tourette's syndrome or a chronic tic disorder. However, we do not know how to predict whose tics will disappear and whose will not.

Do you know if you have a tic disorder? Write down or ask your parents to help you if you do not know the answer. Or you can ask the therapist.

2 Method 1: Suppressing tics

2.1 Session 1: the first training session

Description of the treatment

In the next twelve sessions you are going to learn to suppress the tics for long periods of time. Because if you are able to suppress the tics, you can learn to get used to the unpleasant feeling that you may sometimes have in your body, the tic-alert. And if the tic-alert sounds less often and it bothers you less, you will do fewer tics! Let us explain how this works using a comparison.

You can compare the treatment to what happens when you get a mosquito bite. You probably have been bitten by a mosquito before. Mosquito bites itch! And then you want to scratch the bite as hard as you can. But... if you scratch a mosquito bite, it cannot heal and it keeps on itching. If you are able to resist the itch and do not scratch, the mosquito bite heals faster and the itching will stop. That is the way it is with tics too. The tic is like scratching a mosquito bite. And the itchy bite is the same as the feeling you have in your body in the place where you will do the tic, the tic-alert! If you are able to resist the tic-alert and not do the tic, the unpleasant feeling will become less by itself. Sometimes it takes a while, but if you practice a lot, you can get used to the tic-alert and then it will be easier not to do tics. Just what you want!

The first two sessions are called training sessions. These sessions are like contests in which you are trying to suppress the tics as long as you can. The tics want to get out, but you want to beat them!

Have you ever tried to suppress your tics? And did that work? How long were you able to hold back the tic?

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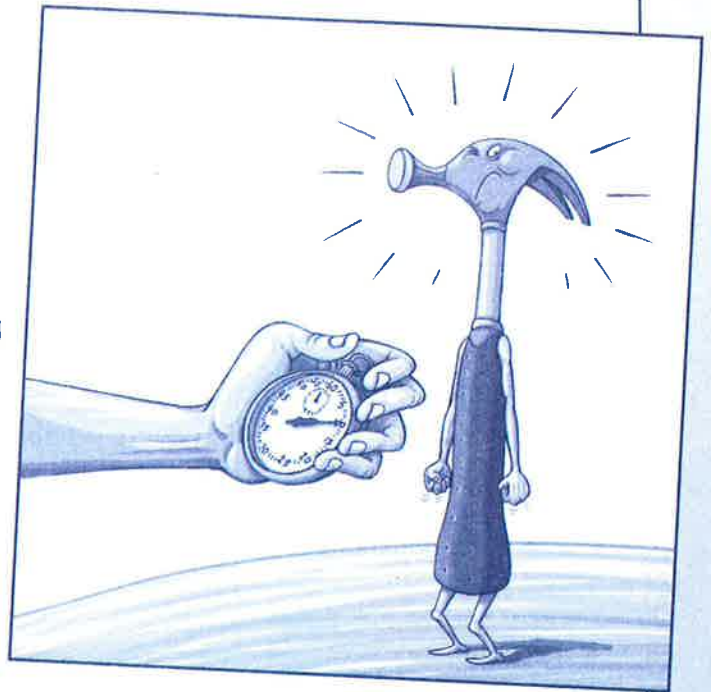
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The therapist is going to help and encourage you to suppress the tics as long as possible. He or she will use a stopwatch for this. As soon as you do a tic, the stopwatch will be stopped and the therapist will write down how long you were able to suppress the tic. Then you start practicing again, trying to beat your last time. This exercise is repeated a few times, each time you can try to beat your own record time. In the beginning this will be hard, but just like learning soccer, dancing or a computer game: the more you practice, the better you get!



*Do you have a person you admire,
an idol? What is your idol good at?
How did he or she get to be where they are now?*

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Exactly! By lots of practicing and training you can get better at something.

After the two training sessions there are ten sessions in which you continue to try and suppress your tics. The difference with the training sessions is that now all tics that slip through are recorded. Try to let as few tics as possible get through and if one does, try to leave it at that one and do not let a whole bunch more through. Because all tics will be recorded! We are going to try and set new records by holding as many tics back as we can.

During the sessions the therapist will ask you to pay close attention to the unpleasant feelings in your body, the tic-alerts. The therapist will ask you how strong these feelings are at a particular moment in time. This is to find out if you are already getting used to the tic-alerts! The therapist will also try to provoke your tic-alerts, by talking about them or getting you excited with a game. This is good practice to get you used to the tic-alerts! Practicing at home with your mom

and dad is also part of the treatment. Yes, that is right; there is homework for your parents too! Want to get started?

Practice

Your battle against the tics is about to start! You are going to try to stop yourself from expressing the tics as long as you can. Each time you will try to suppress the tics longer than the time before. Maybe you can already do it for one minute, maybe five or maybe you can already do it a whole session! We will see how long you are able to suppress the tics. The therapist will use the stopwatch to time how long you suppress the tics and will stop the time if a tic gets through. If this is the same tic three times in a row the therapist will ask you to only keep that particular tic away. You can let the others pass. If you are able to keep the one tic away for 5 minutes in a row, you can go back to trying to suppress all the tics again. The therapist will help and encourage you. Go for it!

- Have you set a new record? Well done! Write it down on your worksheet (appendix 2.1).

Write down how the practice went here.

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Time for a reward?

- If you have done your best to practice, the therapist will give you a sticker or checkmark here!