

Tourette syndrome has a great spectrum of severity. People with Tourette have motor and vocal tics -- rapid, repetitive, meaningless movements and sounds. Common motor tics include forceful blinking, opening the eyes wide, head shaking and grimacing, while the most common vocal tics are sniffing, throat clearing and grunting. Some people are very mildly affected, while others have more severe symptoms which make the disorder more noticeable and disabling. It is believed that Tourette syndrome affects about 1 in 100 people; however, many people do not seek medical attention for the disorder because the symptoms are so mild.

“There are a lot of misconceptions out there about people who suffer from Tourette. The images we see on TV and movies are completely false. I have some patients who have severe tics, but less than 10% of patients with Tourette syndrome swear. It's uncommon,” says Pringsheim.

Tamara Pringsheim is Director of the Calgary Tourette Syndrome Clinic and Clinical Assistant Professor with the Departments of Clinical Neurosciences and Pediatrics University of Calgary. She is also a member of the Institute for Child and Maternal Health at the U of C.

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To view the manuscript, view photos and get more information on Tourette syndrome, please visit our media room:

<http://medicine.ucalgary.ca/mediaroom/tourette/pringsheim>

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