

Study: Psychotherapy can reduce tics

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U.S. scientists have discovered several types of psychotherapy effectively reduce tic symptoms in people with Tourette's disorder or similar conditions.

University of California-Riverside researchers systematically evaluated the effectiveness of a variety of psychosocial treatments designed to reduce tics -- sudden, recurrent and involuntary verbalizations or other behaviors.

Among therapies found to be effective was habit-reversal, a technique that teaches people with tics to become sensitive to tic sensations and replace tic behavior with a more appropriate competing response. Also effective were exposure and response prevention, which also focus on the process of learning new responses to frequently occurring cues or situations.

"Despite the common view that psychopharmacological treatments are the only effective treatments to reduce tics, the results from our research suggest psychosocial treatments are viable alternatives to solely administering psychoactive drugs," the researchers said.

The study appears in the journal *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*.

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